

Using the Diversity Audit Tool to Assess the Status of Women in the Canadian Financial Services Sector: A Case Study

Abstract

A diversity assessment measures an organization's progress in increasing diversity and inclusiveness. As part of a larger study, this paper examines and analyses the application of the Diversity Audit Tool (DAT) to the Canadian Financial Services sector to the status of women's representation within the workforce. The DAT assesses policies and practices to increase diversity and inclusiveness not only on human resource functions but also how diversity can be integrated throughout the organization's value chain. As an exceptionally adaptable and flexible tool, the DAT has been previously applied to education, health care, police services, and information and communications technology (ICT) sectors; it is generalizable enough to examine diversity initiatives across a number of groups as well as to focus on a single one, as it does in this study.

This paper begins with a discussion of the current status of female workers within this sector and identifies a number of barriers that prevent full workforce participation and inclusiveness. The DAT is systematically applied to the financial services sector (reproduced in Appendix 1) and the findings are discussed, examining six key areas: leadership and governance, human resource practices; quality of life and organizational culture; measuring and tracking diversity; integrating or mainstreaming diversity across the value chain; and developing the pipeline. Finally, these findings will be discussed and conclusions will be made.

Introduction

Organizations that seek to increase diversity not only recognize but also value differences in backgrounds, skills, and life experience (Cox & Blake, 1991; Robinson & Dechant, 1997; Gardenswartz & Rowe, 1998). Increasing levels of diversity within organizations is important from a social justice and human rights point of view but also from a business point of view. Academic (Miller & Triana, 2002; Devine et al., 2007; Pomeroy, 2007; Devine et al., 2007) and non-academic research indicates a connection between increasing diversity and an improved financial and organizational performance. This "business" case for diversity identifies five key organizational benefits, including: overcoming the skills shortage and war on talent; responding

to emerging consumer markets; increasing employee creativity and innovation; better employee performance, a higher degree of employee satisfaction, and greater rates of retention; and mitigating legal and reputational costs (see also: Ross & Schneider, 1992; Iles, 1995; Kandola, 1995; Wilson, 1996; Nykiel, 1997; D'Netto & Sohal, 1999; Lee & Chou, 2000; Mor Barak, 2000; Jayne & Dipboye, 2004; Schmidt, 2004; Reinhold, 2005; Tracey & Hinkin, 2008).

A diversity assessment can measure an organization's progress in increasing diversity not only within its human resource functions (Lorbiecki & Jack, 2000; Beaver & Hutchings, 2005; Day & Greene, 2008; Shen et al., 2009) but also throughout the organization's value chain. This paper is part of a larger study that examines and analyzes leading policies and practices to increase diversity across an organization. To this end, a Diversity Audit Tool (DAT) was developed to aid in the assessment of such policies as well as to indicate areas of improvement. This paper discusses how the DAT was applied to the Canadian financial services sector and is presented as a case study to demonstrate the flexibility and adaptability of the DAT not only across sectors but also its ability to focus on diversity initiatives across a number of groups as well as focusing on a single group, in this case: women.

DIVERSITY AUDIT TOOL (DAT)

The DAT is a useful tool for assessing and identifying leading practices to increase diversity in organizations. It aims to identify barriers to full workforce participation that continue to exist within the workplace for certain groups of individuals and to identify ways of overcoming them (Grensing-Pophal, 2001; Backlid et al., 2005). The DAT was created by Ryerson University's Diversity Institute in partnership with Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance Women in Technology (CATAWiT) Forum as part of a project on increasing women's participation in the information and communications technology (ICT) workforce (Cukier, 2009).

The process began by first identifying the barriers to inclusion for women in the Canadian ICT sector. Leading practices that organizations within this sector were then identified and analyzed. Informed by these leading policies and practices, the DAT was created as an assessment tool so that organizations can evaluate its diversity policies. However, it can also be used to inform the development of future diversity practices. Its flexibility and adaptability has resulted in a robust tool that can be identify barriers for a number of culturally diverse groups and, since its development, it has been successfully applied to a number of different Canadian sectors including police services, education, health care, and financial services.

The DAT is divided into six key organizational levels or functions:

1. Leadership and governance: Recognizes that the success of diversity initiatives depends on senior management's commitment to diversity and the integration of diversity goals as part of the organization's strategy.
2. Strong and transparent human resources practices: Identifies areas in recruitment, performance management, promotion, education, training, and knowledge building as well as training and development where organizations can increase diversity.
3. Quality of life and organizational culture: Focuses on the flexibility and ensuring that the organizational culture is inclusive and adaptable for the differing needs of its employees.

4. Measuring and tracking diversity: Recognizes that diversity initiatives are only successful when metrics are used to track and measure progress relative to diversity goals.
5. Integrating or mainstreaming diversity across the value chain: Considering diversity in product development, marketing and customer service programs, communication (both internally and externally), media buys, philanthropy, government relations, and procurement decisions.
6. Developing the pipeline: Strategies aimed at developing a future workforce that is diverse and inclusive. (Cukier, 2009)

DIVERSITY PRACTICES IN THE CANADIAN FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR: A CASE STUDY

The Role of Employment Equity

Canada's financial services sector is federally-regulated and, as a result, falls under the jurisdiction of Canada's *Employment Equity Act* (1995), a piece of federal legislation that requires employers to not only implement non-discriminatory policies and practices but also to implement policies to actively target underrepresented groups – referred to in the legislation as Employment Equity Occupational Groups (EEOGs), consisting of women, Aboriginals, visible minorities, and people with disabilities – in their recruitment and promotion initiatives (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2009). For example, under the act, barriers that encourage discrimination and/or inhibit the recruitment and promotion of diverse groups should first be identified. Following the identification of the barriers, an employment equity plan is developed. Another provision of this legislation is that it requires all industries that are subject to it to track and report back to the government on the composition of their workforce as well as the diversity initiatives that they have implemented (and whether or not they have been successful).

The majority of the workforce in the Canadian financial services sector is made up of women. According to Catalyst (2010b), women represent 60.2% of the of the sector's workforce. However, they remain underrepresented in senior management. In other words, while men represent only 39.8% of the workforce in the financial services industry, they represent 78.2% of all corporate officers, 83.2% of board directors, and 83.1% of CEOs. Figure 1 graphically represents the labour force division of women in the financial services sector in 2009:

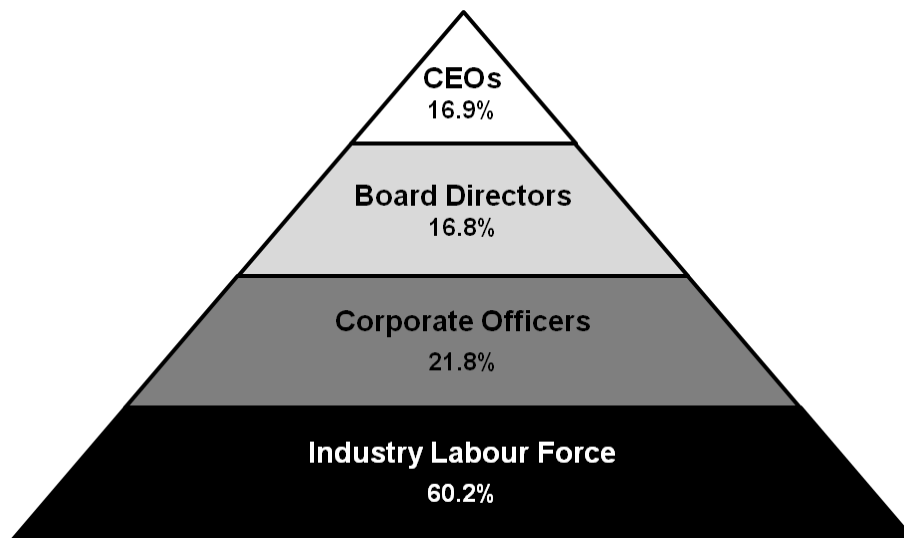


Figure 4: Women in Canadian Finance Pyramid
(Catalyst, 2010b)

RBC saw the number of women – overall – decline by 6% since 1999. However, the number of women in management has remained relatively stable from 2007 to 2010 and appears to have remained so since 1999 (Table 1). Finally, the number of women executives has increased at RBC by 14% since 1999 (RBC, 2010f). When you examine the 2008 external government availability – or the assessment of “the number and characteristics of designated groups available to fill specific jobs/occupations” (Harvey & Blakely, 1993, p. 248) – a pattern emerges. In terms of the data released for 2008, the external government availability is at 65.7% overall, senior management positions at 24.3%, and middle management positions at 54.5% (Scotiabank, 2010a). Based off of this data, RBC exceeds the external availability in terms of overall workforce (by 3.3%) and the number of women executives or senior management (by 14.7%) it has. In terms of middle management, external availability exceeds RBC’s by 0.5%.

Table 1 also shows that, between 2006 and 2009, Scotiabank boasted similar trends when it comes to the workforce representation of women. Women represent 69.6% of the overall workforce at Scotiabank (Scotiabank, 2010a). Over that period, there was a 1.6% decline in the available workforce. Furthermore, other than a brief peak in 2007 (increased by 2.1%), the number of women in management returned to its 2006 value (52.4%) by dropping the amount it had increased in 2008. In senior management positions, there was a similar peak (increased by 1.8%) and decline (decreased by 1.6%) over the years between 2006 and 2008 (Scotiabank, 2010). However, these values exceeded the external labour force availability in both the overall and senior management roles. Middle management was only 0.1% behind the external labour force availability calculation.

Between 2007 and 2008, TD Bank saw a decline in both the overall participation of women in the organization (0.7%) and a decline in the number of women in middle management (0.19%). However, the percentage of women in senior management increased during this time by 7.53%. In terms of the external availability, overall participation at TD Bank was greater, but only by 0.48%. Similarly, the number of women in senior management positions exceeded the external availability 9.48%. However, the number of women in middle management fell short of the

external availability by 7.33% (Table 1). The pattern that these three banks share is that, while overall representation and representation of women in senior management tends to exceed that of the external availability, the representation of middle management tends to fall short of the external availability.

RBC: Workforce composition report (RBC, 2010f; 2011)					
	2010	2009	2008	2007	1999
Overall	67%	68%	69%	69%	74%
Women in Management	54%	54%	54%	55%	54%
Women Executives	37%	39%	39%	36%	25%
SCOTIABANK: Workforce representation of women (Scotiabank, 2010a)					
	2009	2008	2007	2006	External Govm't Availability, 2001
Overall	-	69.6%	70.3%	71.2%	65.7%
Senior Management	-	30.7%	32.3%	30.5%	24.3%
Middle Management	-	52.4%	54.5%	52.4%	54.5%
Professional	-	49.2%	45.3%	46.2%	41.8%
TD BANK: Levels of diversity at TD Bank (TD Bank, 2010a)					
	2009	2008	2007		
Overall	-	66.18%	66.88%		
Women in Senior Management	-	33.78%	26.25%		
Women in Middle Management	-	47.17%	47.36%		

Table 1: Workforce representation of women for TD Bank, RBC, and Scotiabank

BARRIERS TO FULL PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSIVENESS

Stereotypes

In general, pervasive stereotyping continues to exist and has a detrimental effect on the promotion of women in corporate situations. Furthermore, evidence suggests that in the corporate world, women and men “tend to perceive the barriers to advancement differently” (Wellington et al., 2003, p. 18; Apostolidis & Ferguson, 2009). A study completed by Wellington, Kropf, and Gerkovich (2003) found that female executives identify a number of barriers to advancement, but that CEOs – the majority of whom are male – seemed unconvinced that this is, in fact, the reason why women cannot advance further. Instead, these CEOs identified barriers that were very much in line with typical stereotypes about women’s abilities (i.e., their ineffective leadership style and the lack of skills to reach senior levels). The data from their study demonstrates that CEOs tended to downplay the barriers to advancement that came as a result of family commitments and the lack of mentoring. Rather, the CEOs assigned stereotypes about women’s ability to manage effectively as well as their previous management experience as a barrier to their advancement.

The Gendering of Jobs

The gendering of jobs refers to those “stereotypes [that] portray women and men as being suited to or good at different kinds of work” (Catalyst, 2005, p. 21). The corporate environment of the financial services sector has typically been gendered masculine and, as a result, those qualities, traits, abilities that make an employee an effective leader are typically masculine ones. Male leaders stereotypically embody “the hard, quantitative executive skills necessary to close business deals, do analytical analysis, penetrate new markets, generate profits, and make a business run efficiently and productively” (Reinhold, 2005, p. 46). Feminine qualities are

typically presented as contrary to effective leadership as they are typically in a sportive, caregiving position that showcases their “abilities to listen, collaborate, empathize, be inclusive, and build consensus” (p. 46). As a result of these stereotypes, women are systemically disadvantaged when it comes to opportunities for advancement. For example, Jenner and Ferguson (2009) argue that men are typically promoted to line positions in sales or management. As “line experience is often a prerequisite to promotion to the highest ranks in the company, including the position of CEO” (Jenner & Ferguson, 2009, p. 12), women’s absence in terms of participation is quite significant as this disadvantages them when compared to male workers who are heavily represented in these positions.

The Practice of Conscious and Unconscious Gender Bias and Discrimination

Reinhold (2005) calls the stereotyping of mothers “the maternal wall” (p. 46), whereby male managers advance male prospects over mothers as they assume that maternal absenteeism is the result of an inability to properly manage work and family responsibilities (whereas male absenteeism is assumed to be business-related). In other words, there is a pervasive, yet subtle sexist bias against women that questions their ability to simultaneously and successfully manage jobs that have a high potential for advancement and their life and family responsibilities. As a consequence of this widespread stereotype, managers will assume that all women share this feeling and will overlook viable female candidates for development and promotion in favour of male ones.

Lack of Networking and Mentorship Opportunities

Studies (Metz, 2009) have shown that mentoring opportunities “assist women [to] advance more rapidly and to higher levels in the organisation than they would without it” (p. 194). Networking opportunities are scarce for women in the financial services sector and it is through these informal and formal career networks that male employees have historically held this advantage over women’s heads. In order to level the playing field, businesses need to support and set up networks – both internally and externally – in order to increase the number of contacts as well as to foster collegial, yet professional, relationships similar to the ones that male financial service sector employees have.

Work/Life Imbalance

In order to balance out their responsibilities in the workplace with having a family, many women strategically time having children so that it does not interfere with the potential for career advancement and to ensure that it occurs during a period of relatively stable and predictable employment (Archbold & Hassell, 2009; Metz, 2009). These women often find themselves juggling the responsibility of both their family and work responsibilities and attempt to negotiate between the two roles, ultimately sacrificing one or the other. Alternatively, the lack of family-friendly policies also result in women who want to attain these leadership positions either choosing to remain childless or to put off having children until they have reached their occupational goals. Similarly, research (Wood & Newton, 2006) has suggested that, as women are typically responsible for the majority of domestic work inside the home while often working outside the home simultaneously, women often choose to remain in relatively stable and often non-management positions within the organization for most of their career. These positions offer

little hope for advancement but have enough flexibility to allow women to successfully manage family and childcare responsibilities.

DAT ANALYSIS

These findings were the result of the systematic application of the DAT (reproduced in Appendix 1) to identify and analyze diversity initiatives in the financial services sector that aim to increase the participation of women in this sector.

Leadership and Governance

The financial services sector demonstrates the increased likelihood of success in implementing diversity policies as many organizations have top management commitment (See Appendix 1). As a result, diversity becomes an integral part of these organizations' operational strategies and, as a result, are integrated and implemented in the firms' functional activities. For example, the CEOs and other senior managers at Scotiabank (2008), TD Bank (2009a), and RBC (Perkins, 2010), have all been very vocal in terms of the importance of diversity issues and the benefits that the firm will experience once it has successfully implemented policies and programs to combat these issues. In addition, while all three of these banks had diversity councils, some even had their own specific committees for women's initiatives (BMO, 2008; RBC, 2009b; TD Bank, 2010c). RBC (2009b) reported that its President headed this council; at TD Bank (2010c), the Chairman of the Board was council head. The remaining bank, BMO (2004), had appointed a Vice-President for Equity and Employment Engagement.

Strong and Transparent Human Resources Practices

Both BMO (2005) and TD Bank (2010a) offer diversity training to their employees. TD Bank's training program, Embracing Diversity Workshop, boasts a 90% management completion by the year 2009. BMO (2004), recognizing that executives have a number of biases about women, focussed its executive training on battling unconscious attitudes and beliefs that can influence decisions concerning the recruitment, development, and promotion of women. In addition, CIBC's (2009) only entry on the DAT analysis concerned whether or not the organization had a plan for keeping employees' knowledge and skills current, especially after having a child. The program, called ReConnect: Career Renewal for Professional Women, was created through a partnership between the Richard Ivey School of Business and CIBC and is the first executive development program that deals with the issue of re-establishing women's place in the workforce (CIBC, 2009).

RBC (2009b), TD Bank (2009a, 2010d), BMO (2004), and Scotiabank (2010b) offer a number of programs to give, promote, and organize mentoring arrangements, and also support diversity networking events. BMO (2004) and RBC (2009b) encourage its female senior managers to take the opportunity to mentor women who are either new hires or who show great potential to becoming a leader herself. For example, Scotiabank's Advancement of Women (AoW) initiative has created a number of networking programs targeted at women – such as the Young Women of Influence series targeted at new graduates and a number of professional development workshops. Similar networking options are The Women's Executive Network, which brings together female executives who have been in the sector for many years, and the Scotia Women's Connection,

which offers networking opportunities to women who are at the level of manager or director within the organization (Hsu, 2007; Scotiabank, 2008).

Quality of Life and Organizational Culture

The financial services sector has placed strong emphasis on improving both the quality of life of its employees as well as their experiences of the overall organizational culture. This takes the form of flexible working arrangements, family-friendly policies, as well as opportunities for individuals to utilize resources that encourage a proper work/life balance. Both RBC (2010f) and BMO (2004) offer flexible work schedules, including “modified work schedules, work from home/off-site, job sharing, [and the option to] purchase vacation time” in order to allow women to better manage their work and home lives (RBC, 2010f).

Family-friendly policies also facilitate the achievement of an appropriate work/life balance, reducing stress on the employee, and increasing their level of performance within the company. This can take the form of a referral service offered by the employer to its employees for childcare and eldercare services (BMO, 2004) to emergency childcare and eldercare arrangements that can be utilized when the employee’s regular caregivers are unavailable at short notice (RBC, 2010f). Similarly, organizations offer “People Care Days” (BMO, 2006, p. 19), which are paid short-term leave of absences that include personal and family health days in addition to days off so that the employee can attend educational and career development opportunities.

Measuring and Tracking Diversity

Specifically, BMO, Scotiabank, RBC, and TD Bank all measured the rate of women’s advancement in key management and specialty roles. This demonstrates the organization’s commitment to diversity as once the organization starts to measure the phenomenon, they become accountable in ensuring that change occurs.

Furthermore, the reporting requirements for Employment Equity suggest that there are diversity targets for increasing the participation of women in senior management, as well as participation in equal pay audits to ensure that equal pay is given for equally valued work. As most of the banks hosted diversity reports – that exceeded the reporting requirements demanded by Employment Equity legislation – and an assortment of data on their websites, performance is most likely benchmarked and compared across the sector. Finally, publishing this data ensures that the organization must remain committed to a diversity strategy that is in excess of the one required by legislative and regulatory bodies.

Integrating or Mainstreaming Diversity across the Value Chain

RBC actively developed and targeted its products and services to potential female clients (RBC, 2009a). Furthermore, its marketing and customer service communications reflected RBC’s commitment to increasing the participation of women in the financial services sector and situating itself as the organization that is best equipped to serve this diverse population. RBC has also committed itself to diversity initiatives both internally and externally by actively seeking out female-owned suppliers (RBC, 2010d). A consequence of such a strategy is that it communicates

to these suppliers that RBC not only better understands but also can better serve them than the other banks.

In terms of communicating the importance of diversity through the organization's philanthropic activities, BMO offers funds to charitable organizations that are supported through volunteer activities (BMO, 2004). Scotiabank (2010c), on the other hand, actively gives charitable donations to causes in order to communicate their commitment to increasing the number of women participating in the sector. For example, Scotiabank identified itself as supporting several organizations that provide networking opportunities for women in management: the Rotman School of Business' Women in Management Association (WiMA), Schulich's Women in Leadership (WiL) association, and Queen's Women in Leadership (Q.WiL).

Develop the Pipeline

RBC and TD Bank are the banks that are the most heavily invested in developing the pipeline. For example, RBC provides outreach to schools through scholarships, sponsorships, donations and community programs to support education and youth (RBC, 2009a, 2009b). Similarly, RBC supports associations that help women in business, such as WEConnect, IMB Women in the Financial Sector, as well as sponsoring the Women of Distinction awards (RBC, 2009b).

TD Bank is involved in supporting a number of organizations and community initiatives, including: Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF; equality), Women's Executive Network (WXN; mentoring), Oasis (haven for women and children), and Wings for Success (supporting low income women) (TD Bank, 2010b). Supporting these organizations and initiatives creates public goodwill toward the company. Similarly, TD Bank's support extends to programs that encourage women to seek it out as an employer of choice. The organization sponsors a speaker series called Women in Leadership, supporting female role models (TD Bank, 2010b). TD has also pledged \$1 million dollars to the Ivey School of Business to fund scholarships for female MBA candidates (TD Bank, 2010b). For those women who have the opportunity to participate in either program, TD Bank has cast itself as an attractive employer who is committed to increasing the number of women in the financial services sector.

In terms of supporting and collaborating with organizations and their research to further increase diversity, both BMO (2005) and RBC (2010b) sponsor research reports through Catalyst, which is an organization focused on increasing the participation of women in historically underrepresented sectors. Furthermore, BMO's CEO and President serve on the Catalyst Canadian Authority Board and the Catalyst Board of Directors (BMO, 2004). By taking such an active role in supporting research, both BMO and RBC demonstrate their commitments to diversity.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Whether or not the practices identified the DAT increases the level of diversity and inclusiveness at a firm is influenced directly by how these policies are understood by all of the employees within an organization. If employees do not accept these policies, not only will the issues underlying the implementation of these practices remain unresolved, but also it will likely

generate new problems that will impede the promotion of diversity and inclusiveness within the organization. Kottke and Agars (2005) note that often “these programs fail because organizations have not given enough attention to the underlying processes at work in the organization in which these programs are being implemented” (p. 191). In other words, to increase the level of gender diversity within an organization is to actively control the influence that culture has on the organization.

Similarly, there are underlying barriers that continue to prevent women from full participation in the workforce – whether in general or in the financial services sector. Diversity initiatives intended to increase the attraction, participation, promotion, development, and retention of women will continue to do very little until these weaknesses are resolved. Despite the changes that have occurred in the last several decades, it is clear that more work needs to be done to develop and assess programs aimed at increasing women’s participation in the workforce.

For example, one of the ways in which to combat stereotypical thinking consists of training individuals within the organization so that they have the ability to be self-reflexive and have the ability to deconstruct their own thought processes (Kottke and Agars, 2005). As the majority of gendered stereotypes are simultaneously unconsciously transmitted by actors within the organization and through the culture of the organization itself, training individuals to deconstruct their thought processes is one of the first steps to combating these biases and eliminating these stereotypes. The process of active self-reflexivity – wherein the practitioner interrogates the reasons why he/she made a particular decision and the process that he/she used to come to that decision – serve to minimize (and ultimately eliminate) the effect that gender stereotypes have on the decision-making process. Self-reflexivity will, therefore, eventually ensure that decisions and initiatives that are implemented are as gender neutral as possible.

The combined implementation of policies and practices to increase diversity – a product of both Employment Equity legislation and the benefits identified from the “business” case for increasing diversity – appears to have resulted in the “removal of overt discrimination and bias” (Melgoza & Cox, 2009, p. 652) from the workplace. However, discriminations “continued to exist but were masked by a strong rhetoric of gender equality, which made the articulating experiences of gender discrimination difficult” (Kelan, 2009, p. 198) to those who experienced it. Furthermore, when discrimination and bias were identified and articulated, they were often deemed as so integral to the proper functioning of that particular organizational role and could not – or should not – be questioned or challenged. As a result, female employees who experience bias and discrimination first hand “often feel individually responsible for developing mechanisms to overcome gender discrimination and seem to lack the resources to talk about this as a systemic and category-based experience” (Kelan, 2009, p. 205). Therefore, since policies and practices have created an environment where gender bias and discrimination no longer exists, this employee does not see these experiences as individual occurrences. An ideological conflict, therefore, erupts within the individual who is unable to reconcile her experiences with the assertion that the diversity practices implemented have resulted in a workplace that is free of bias and discrimination in terms of gender. As a result, these employees “lose the energy to reconcile these contradictory realities and retreat instead into a position that dismisses the relevance of gender in their working lives” (Kelan, 2009, p. 206). In other words, the covert gender bias and discrimination remains unacknowledged, unaddressed, and unresolved.

Furthermore, Kottke and Agars (2005) argue that programs that increase the number of mentoring and networking activities for the organization's female employees do have some benefits (such as "an attempt to provide information, guidance, and support" (p. 196) for new graduates). However, these programs do not challenge the structural mechanisms at work that discriminate against women; they simply provide a model for female employees to successfully navigate a discriminatory social structure. This makes discrimination a profoundly individualized act, as it divorces the acts of discrimination and gender bias from the social structures that create and recreate those inequalities. In other words, "fix the women' strategies do not get at the underlying barriers" (Kottke & Agars, 2005, p. 196) that create gender bias and discrimination within the organization. Rather, by providing an example of a woman who has successfully navigated those social structures within the organization, the focus shifts from changing the social structures that create inequalities to changing the woman.

To address the issue of conscious and unconscious gender bias that are the result of a perceived distributive injustice, the organization can proactively communicate the idea that the procedures and processes through which an organizational decision is made was equitable, just, and fair. As Kottke and Agars (2005) argue "even when a decision is not in one's favour, if the procedure [through which that decision has occurred] has been seen as fair, the decision will be accepted" (p. 197). Finally, one of the ways in which male employees and managers combat the threat of women's encroachment on male power positions, especially in jobs that are gendered masculine, is by excluding women from the decision making processes. In other words, responding to women's entry into stereotypically masculine positions, men typically "conduct less business in the formal setting where women are present and conduct more business in informal venues (e.g., the executive washroom, the golf course)" (Kottke and Agars, 2005, p. 197). To prevent this from occurring, it is imperative that organizational decision-making becomes as transparent as possible. By ensuring that the decision-making process remains within the realm of the formal and the visible, male managers will have no choice but to conduct business in the formal settings where women are present.

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APPENDIX 1:

	Practice	Example	Organization	Initiative	Notes	Source
(1.) Leadership and Governance:						
	Does the board consider diversity in identifying and developing candidates?	Positive correlation between diverse board and performance				
		Diverse boards have a higher ROA and ROI than do boards that are homogeneous				
	Do senior executives pro-actively communicate the importance of diversity inside and outside the organization?	In addition, by having management initiate the process, the strategy becomes incorporated in the firm's operational activities	Scotiabank	Connects strategy to advance women to performance targets	All information is on the company's diversity intranet site, including a toolkit for managers, <i>Diversity in Action</i>	(Scotiabank, 2008, p. 5)
			TD Bank	Communicate consistently and clearly diversity commitments and initiatives		(TD Bank, 2009a)
			RBC	Senior management/CEO discuss the importance of diversity to the employees and to their constituents		(RBC, 2009)
	Do leaders reflect the composition of the workforce?	When senior management is representative of the workforce, it can more effectively develop the pipeline (i.e. offer training and development to under-represented groups)	TD Bank	5 of the 17 members of the TD Board of Directors are Women		(TD Bank, 2010c)
		As a result, members of under-represented groups report more job satisfaction and greater participation	TD Bank	Women make up 33.78% of TD's VPs, SrVPs, and ExVPs		(TD Bank, 2010c)

Is there a diversity council?	Responsible for creating and implementing policies to increase diversity	RBC	RBC's Diversity Leadership Council	Chaired by the President and CEO of the company	(RBC, 2009b, p. 3)
	Ideally, members of senior management sit on the council (increases accountability in terms of ensuring that the practices are implemented); members of the council should be representative of the organization (i.e. all levels of employees) and of under-represented groups (i.e. women)	BMO	Established an Advisory Council on the Equitable Workplace	Also established regional Councils	(BMO, 2004)
		TD Bank	Diversity Leadership Council (with a Subcommittee for expanding leadership opportunities for women)	Drive enterprise-wide diversity initiatives; work with businesses and support groups to embed diversity into the business plan. Chaired by Chairman and CEO, Bill Hatanaka; create subcommittees to work on each key diversity issue	(TD Bank, 2010c)
Is there a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) at the Senior VP level with lines of authority?	A Chief Diversity Officer is a senior manager (at the Senior VP level) who has the authority to make the changes necessary within the organization to meet its diversity targets	BMO	Appointed a Vice-President for Equity and Employment Engagement		(BMO, 2004)
	Must be an active participant in change (i.e. give them power and authority) rather than just a figurehead				
Has the business case for diversity been developed and widely communicated?	Linking diversity initiatives to improving the organization's performance helps produce commitment from both managers and non-managers				

	All employees at all levels need to understand what benefits these policies will initiate				
Are explicit diversity goals and policies in place and communicated internally and externally?	While most organizations are governed by laws and regulations when it comes to diversity, an organization can differentiate itself by going beyond the reporting standard	TD Bank	Communicate consistently and clearly diversity commitments and initiatives	All information is on the company's diversity intranet site, including a toolkit for managers, <i>Diversity in Action</i>	(TD Bank, 2009a)
	Further, by communicating these policies and metrics, the organization differentiates itself from others in terms of its commitment to diversity, as well as creating an inclusive and open organization				
Are there well-developed mechanisms to handle employee complaints about harassment and discrimination?	Without adequate means to apply policies and rules, there is little that those policies can do to help combat a problem such as harassment and discrimination				
	Likewise, without a system of feedback, the effectiveness of these policies cannot be measured (and then changed if necessary)				
Is performance and compensation for managers tied to meeting diversity targets?	The result of making a performance evaluation tied to the organization's diversity goals means that these goals are likely to be	BMO	Established accountability at senior levels	Did not explain how they did this	(BMO, 2004, p. 20)

		acted upon instead of just being talked about				
		Similarly, economic incentives are strong motivators when it comes to achieving diversity goals				
	Are there female leaders with profile internally and externally?	Promotion of leaders who are from under-represented groups in the media	RBC	Profiles of Diversity Leadership Council members	On the company's Active Leaders intranet website to tell, teach, and champion RBC's diversity strategy both inside and outside the organization	(RBC, 2009b, p. 4)
		Effective in attracting more applicants (these leaders then become role models, mentors, and coaches)				
(2.) Strong and Transparent Human Resources Practices:						
a. Recruitment	Are reviews of vacant positions undertaken to ensure that the qualifications required fit the demands of the job?	Emphasize general skills, attributes and competencies over technical knowledge to increase the number and diversity of applicants				
		May also increase creativity and innovation				
	Does the organization consider alternative pathways to positions?	Open up leadership and senior management roles by defining them in terms of key competencies and skills and not technical knowledge or experience				

Are vacant positions posted?	Increase diversity by making public and then promoting job openings	BMO	Publicize management job opportunities	BMO-wide notification system to notify job opportunities at all management levels and job families internally	(BMO, 2004, p. 17)
Do recruiters specifically target women?	Advertise for diverse applicants in targeted media				
	Hire recruiting firm that specializes in diversity				
Do all internship, co-op, and placement programs have diversity targets?	Promote these opportunities to under-represented group associations at universities and colleges	BMO	Bank-Wide Student Training Program	College and University internships (summer students); diversity targets	(BMO, 2004, p. 5)
	Result: Broader range of applicants and (likely) more diverse group of participants				
Are selection committees representative?	Diverse selection committee = first impression of the organization as one that committed to diversity (the interviewee will want to work there if he/she is from an underrepresented group)				
	Ensure that the under-represented members of the selection committee are active and involved in the process				

	Are bias-free interviewing processes used?	Use interview techniques that are inclusive and understanding to diverse cultural histories, experiences, and expectations				
		Include members from the applicants group in the interview (they might give insight)				
		Make it about sharing ideas, experiences, and competencies and not technical skills				
b. Performance Management	Is accountability for diversity targets and practices built into performance management systems?	Diversity as a key strategic goal can only occur when those who make policies to increase diversity are held accountable in terms of making sure these policies become an integral part of the organization's operational activities				
c. Promotion	Does succession planning take into account diversity targets?	Diversity has to occur at all levels in a firm (i.e. senior management has to be representative of the workforce)	TD Bank	Strategic succession planning (i.e. resource planning process)	Identify high-potential women for promotion (ongoing; through management and executive resource planning)	(TD Bank, 2009a; 2010d)
		Avoid "mirror hiring" – promoting individuals who look like you, act like you – by using skills inventories to determine what skills are needed				
	Are high potential female given opportunities to take "stretch" assignments?	These assignments are used to "prove" oneself in an organization (i.e. a high risk project on top of regular work)				

		Communicate that these opportunities exist to everyone in the firm and ensure that all have access to the resources and tools that they need to complete the assignment				
	Are promotional opportunities and processes communicated openly and clearly to employees?	Clear and consistent communication within the organization that informs everyone of promotional opportunities				
		Can also occur by networking and formal mentorship				
	Are career planning systems in place to support employees?	Partner under-represented workers with senior managers so that the latter can help the former identify their career goals and construct an action plan to help advance the workers' careers	RBC	Career development for new hires	Build leadership schools through a rotation of assignments in the Graduate Leadership program; hired 25% of women candidates	(RBC, 2009b, p. 2)
c. Education, Training, and Knowledge Building	Is diversity tracked in employee separations (retirements, dismissals, voluntary exits, layoffs)?	Determine and track metrics in recruitment, promotion/development, and retention				
		If you cannot measure it, you cannot see where leakage occurs (where the organization is failing these under-represented groups)				
	Are exit interviews conducted and are the results	Help to identify trends or behaviours that are causing individuals to leave				

	acted upon?	This information can help improve those trends or behaviours, fixing the leakage problem				
d. Training and Development	Does orientation for new employees address diversity?	Introduce new hires to diversity policies				
		Demonstrate behaviours encouraged at the organization to promote diversity				
	Do all employees receive mandatory training on diversity?	Helps to create a common culture among the employees	TD Bank	Embracing Diversity Workshop	1-day session; by the end of 2009, over 90% of all managers will have completed this	(TD Bank, 2010a)
		Can promote awareness, make the business case, or provide resources to stop behaviours that are counterintuitive to diversity policies within the firm				
	Do managers receive specialized training on diversity?	Top-down approach	BMO	Executive gender diversity training	1.5 day workshop to battle unconscious attitudes and beliefs distort the selection, development and promotion of women	(BMO, 2004, p. 17)
		Helps to diminish bias in management and adapt an attitude that is consistent with the firm's diversity strategy (and among its managers)	BMO	Managers underwent people development skills	Create a work environment where men and women succeed	(BMO, 2004, p. 17)
Also gives managers the skills to identify and accommodate difference						

Do individuals involved in the hiring processes receive specialized training on hiring and bias-free hiring?	Eliminates bias in the interviewing and selection process by identifying culture-specific behaviours				
	More equitable and open assessments				
Are high-potential female employees given access to specialized training and professional development that would enhance their ability to succeed	Helps to develop the next generation of senior management within the organization	RBC	Women's Association of Financial Counsellors (WAFC)	An Employee Resource Group that nurtures women's careers and aims to attract and retain future members	(RBC, 2010c)
	These training/education sessions ensures that under-represented groups have the knowledge and skills necessary to become a manager	BMO	Created the Possibilities Centre	Gives employees professional development tools (skills assessment, career planning, goal preparation)	(BMO, 2004, p. 17)
		BMO	Career potential meetings	Gave employees the opportunity to discuss with managers and skills-training coaches to highlight their personal potential, career goals, and aspirations	(BMO, 2004, p. 18)
		BMO	Increase career opportunities	Cross-training exchanges; job training and skills enrichment	(BMO, 2004, p. 18)
		BMO	Partnered with Dalhousie MBA	High potential employees can gain access to the MBA program there (Financial Services)	(BMO, 2004, p. 18)
Are provisions available for keeping employees current during/after parental leave?	Enable parents – while on leave – to stay on top of the changes that the organization, the industry, and the general economy	CIBC	ReConnect: Career Renewal for Returning Professional Women	In partnership with Richard Ivey school of Business; first executive development program to help professional women re-establish their careers after taking time out of the workplace to pursue other activities	(CIBC, 2009, p. 24)

	Firm pays for: participation in seminars/workshops, subscriptions to professional associations, participation in important meetings by using the internet, and further education				
Are customized training programs available for high potential employees?	Give those high potential employees the opportunity and support he/she needs to become senior managers or executives				
Are formal mentoring/coaching programs (internal or external) provided?	Helps under-represented groups learn about the organization (may feel more comfortable among their own group)	RBC	Women who are senior management mentor new female hires	Demonstrate a balance can be reached between a successful career and a good personal life	(RBC, 2009b, p. 2)
	External mentorship programs give workers the skills and experience they need to become senior leaders or executives in their organization	BMO	Executive Advisor Program	Mentoring and career development	(BMO, 2004, p. 18)
		TD Bank	Networking Programs	Allows women to strengthen their professional networks and meet with senior management; for middle-managers a group mentoring program was offered	(TD Bank, 2009a; 2010d)
Are formal diversity networks supported?	These groups are a place where employees feel free to discuss diversity issues and offer suggestions for their solution	Scotiabank	ScotiaWomen's Connection Network	Networking series targeted at females (at the Manager to Director levels); quarterly networking event to help put women in touch with potential role models, mentors and leaders	(Sociabank, 2010b)

		Helps improve diversity practices within the organization	Scotiabank	Advancement of Women (AoW) Initiative	Young Women of Influence Evening Series (for women just starting out in their career; networking and career development presentations); The Women's Executive Network (career networking opportunities for established businesswomen in the community); Scotia Women's Connection (see above)	(Sociabank, 2008, p. 13)
(3.) Quality of Life and Organizational Culture:						
Are flexible working arrangements available?	Flexible work options to accommodate life responsibilities (i.e. child care, elder care)	RBC	Flexible working solutions	Modified work schedule; work from home/off-site, job sharing, purchase vacation time	(RBC, 2010f)	
	Clearly communicated to all employees for the perception of fairness among employees	BMO	Formalize plans for flexible work arrangements	Corporate Policy on Balancing Multiple Commitments; codified and distributed to employees in a handbook (<i>Flexing Your Options: A How-To Guide on Flexible Work Arrangements</i>)	(BMO, 2004, p. 19)	
		BMO	LOA for adoptive parents	Parental benefits (combined with EI) to equal 95% of the employees pre-leave weekly gross base pay/Benefit Eligible Earnings	(BMO, 2004, p. 20)	
Are family-friendly policies in place including, for example, extended parental leave and family emergency days, elder care,	Family-friendly policies helps to integrate flexibility and helps to improve work-life balance; there's a positive link between performance and achieving this balance	BMO	Offers People Care Days	Short, paid LOAs for personal/family health, career days/education, or community service	(BMO, 2004, p. 19)	

support for parents travelling?	Often people who have these kind of responsibilities were distracted from work because of personal issues – to the detriment of their productivity and performance	BMO	Taking Care	Comprehensive referral service for childcare and eldercare	(BMO, 2004, p. 19)
Is on-site child care and emergency day care services available?	Often women cannot return to work because they need someone to care for their children	RBC	Emergency backup childcare and emergency in-home eldercare (family friendly policies)	RBC offers access to information services and resource materials by phone or online	(RBC, 2010f)
	Top organizations utilize this to become an employer of choice				
Are employee workloads and employer expectations managed?	Individual plans to balance work and life				
	Overworked employees – due to stress – suffer from higher levels of absenteeism (due to health issues) and lower productivity				
Do employees have access to coaching and counselling to help manage workload and stress?	EAPs/counselling/life coaches are resources that employees can use to help employees find an appropriate level of work/life balance	RBC	Living Well intranet	Offers tools and resources to help lead manage work/life balance	(RBC, 2010f)
		BMO	Employee Assistance Programs	24/7 emergency access; morning, afternoon, and some evening appointments	(BMO, 2004, p. 20)
(4.) Measuring and Tracking Diversity:					
Are there metrics on the participation of women at each management level relative to	Higher levels of representation are the product of tracking and publishing diversity figures (usually taken from anonymous	RBC Scotiabank TD Bank	Given that the organization has comparative data (i.e. before and after the implementation of diversity initiatives), it must have first established a baseline measurement and then tracked the	Assumption based off of the organization's reports	

the available labour force?	surveys)		effect that the initiatives had on it		
	Need to establish and track metrics, which demonstrate the organization's commitment to diversity	BMO	Measured the rate of women's advancement	Key management and specialty roles; done quarterly. Establish baseline and then track effectiveness	(BMO, 2004, p. 20)
		Scotiabank	Tracking representation of women at the VP+ (and equivalent) levels	In 2008, metrics were extended to include the feeder pool targets for employees at the senior manager and director levels	(Scotiabank, 2010a, p. 13)
Are there explicit diversity targets for participation and for women in management?	Clear targets help to ensure that senior management and executives are reflects that of the workforce	TD Bank BMO RBC Scotiabank		Assumed, given the firms' required participation in employment equity legislation	
	When published publically, gives individuals an idea of which organization leads the industry in terms of diversity				
Are there regular employee engagement surveys with self-reported demographic data?	Self-reporting (especially anonymous self-reporting) is generally the most accurate as well as the preferred means of gathering statistical information in firms				
Are equal pay audits conducted to ensure equal pay for work of equal value??	Reveals inequalities in pay between different workers (usually gendered); organization can then rectify this manner	TD Bank BMO RBC Scotiabank	Ensures equal pay for equal work	Assumed, given the firms' required participation in employment equity legislation	
	The openness of the process means that the organization is accountable for its				

		compensation practices, especially if they are discriminatory				
		The audit itself helps to prove to the organization's workers that the organization is committed to diversity				
	Is performance benchmarked against others in the industry?	If diversity is to translate into a competitive advantage, then it must be better at it than its competitors are				
		Benchmarking demonstrates where a firm is while simultaneously determining where it wants to be				
	Are these results tracked and reported with feedback loops for action?	By sharing the information, the firm must remain committed to this strategy	BMO	Published a report outlining diversity progress	Employees, customers, directors, shareholders	(BMO, 2004, p. 20)
(5.) Integrating or Mainstreaming Diversity Across the Value Chain:						
a. Product Development	Is diversity considered in designing and developing products?	Diverse teams are more innovative and creative	RBC	Target women and niche markets	Attract female clients and prospects	(RBC, 2009a, p. 7)
		Also members of under-represented groups know what that group wants and can communicate this with the organization; creating a new market opportunity and/or competitive advantage				
b. Marketing and Customer Service	Does the organization consider and communicate the	Reflect diversity in the operation's marketing projects; demonstrates that this firm can better	RBC	Target women and niche markets	Attract female clients and prospects	(RBC, 2009a, p. 7)

	importance of diversity in its marketing and customer service programs?	serve its diverse population				
		Expansion the firm's market into new ethno-cultural and/or socio-cultural markets				
c. Communications	Is the importance of diversity communicated in all its publications (internal and external)?	If the importance of community is not communicated through the organization's publications, then the firm might miss out on valuable markets				
		Helps to eradicate stereotypes from the community				
d. Media Buys	Is the importance of diversity considered and communicated in media buys?	Concerns itself with ensuring that the firm's advertising reflects the organization's commitment to diversity				
		Specifically targeted to under-represented groups				
e. Philanthropy	Is the importance of diversity considered and communicated in philanthropic activities?	Encourage diversity as a key strategic asset through giving	BMO	Volunteer Grants Program	Provides funds to organizations supported through volunteer activities (permanent and pensioned BMO employees are eligible)	(BMO, 2004, p. 19)
			Scotiabank	Charitable donations and volunteering to appropriate causes	Women in Management Association (WiMA), Rotman School of Business; Schulich Women in Leadership (WiL); Queen's Women in Leadership (Q.WiL)	(Scotiabank, 2010c)

f. Government Relations	Is the importance of diversity considered in government relations?	Work with local, provincial, and federal governments to lobby for better legislation and representation in the workforce				
g. Procurement	Is the importance of diversity considered and communicated in procurement processes?	The firm is so committed to diversity (not just internally, but externally)	RBC	Use suppliers who are either female- or minority-owned		(RBC, 2010d)
(6.) Developing the Pipeline:						
	Is outreach to schools provided regarding opportunities and incentives for women in this industry?	Publication of materials and public scholarships help to encourage students to work for that company upon graduation	RBC	Support education and youth	Scholarships, sponsorships, donations and community programs (i.e. Junior Achievement Diversity Program)	(RBC, 2009a, pp. 8-9); (RBC, 2009b, p. 15)
	Does the organization participate with associations and professional organizations in programs to promote its commitment to diversity?	Helps the organization (and the people within it) understand under-represented (future) groups and (future) markets	RBC	Support associations that help women in business	WEConnect; IBM Women in the Financial sector; sponsored Women of Distinction Awards	(RBC, 2009b, p. 14, 17)
	Is the importance of diverse representation considered in partnerships with educational institutions (i.e. research, executive education, training and development)?	Promote the organization as the employer of choice to the next generation of workers	TD Bank	Supporting other community initiatives	Supports: Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF; equality); Women's Executive Network (WXN; mentoring); Oasis (haven for women and children); Wings for Success (low-income women); New Jersey Association of Women's Business Owners; Foundation for BC Women (Aboriginal Women)	(TD Bank, 2010b)

	Does the organization collaborate and encourage development of re-entry and transitional programs	Very little money is currently spent on training – resulting in limited ability to move to management roles This might keep under-represented groups in the lower levels of the organization				
	Does the organization work with institutions to support programs to encourage women to enter these kinds of jobs (i.e. hybrid programs and double majors)?	Create opportunities in the community for networking and mentorship in hopes of becoming the employer of choice	TD Bank	Supporting women role models	Sponsor Women in Leadership Fund (speaker series)	(TD Bank, 2010b)
TD Bank			Supporting education	Pledged \$1 million to Ivey School of Business for scholarships to women MBA candidates)	(TD Bank, 2010b)	
	Does the organization ensure that all of its outreach activities in cooperation with educational institutions, government, and associations consider representation?	In these roles, executives should act as advocates for diversity in all areas				
	Does the organization collaborate and support research and evaluation aimed at promoting effective diversity interventions?	Increased research (sponsored by organizations) will help to increase representation further	RBC	Sponsor research reports	Catalyst	(RBC, 2010b)

			BMO	Sponsor research reports	CEO and President serves on the Catalyst Canadian Authority Board and the Catalyst Board of Directors	(BMO, 2004, p. 5)
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