

Accelerating change

Ideas for action from the Male Champions of Change

Stepping up as Leaders



As CEOs, we know how much our actions create momentum for change. We also know that in the case of increasing the representation of women in leadership, lasting change means more than we anticipated. It requires stepping up and changing our ways, demonstrating our commitment and prioritising the issue. It means taking action, not just talking about it.

ACTIONS

◆ Reflect on your personal leadership and take action

Use [The Leadership Shadow model](#) to reflect on your own leadership and whether you are taking action and sending the right signals about women and gender balance in your organisation. Develop an action plan to address feedback.

◆ Lead, Listen and Learn engagement sessions with your employees

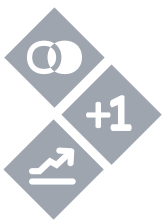
Undertake Lead, Listen and Learn sessions with a broad cross-section of people in your organisation – women and men – to understand the barriers to advancing gender equality and identify CEO-led actions and decisions that can make a meaningful difference. Implement actions within your organisation and – where appropriate – collectively as a group for wide-reaching impact.

◆ Take the Panel Pledge

Join Male Champions of Change by taking the [Panel Pledge](#) to ensure there is gender balance on panels you are invited to speak on or participate in. This involves:

- Insisting that as a condition of acceptance, you expect women to participate in panels in a meaningful way.
- Reserving the right to withdraw from the event, should this not be the case when the speaker list is finalised.
- Offering names of women from within your organisation or network and, if helpful, pointing them to resources for support in finding women.
- Tracking and reporting on the number of panels and forums you attend where the [Panel Pledge](#) has impact.

Creating accountability



We make change happen in our organisations by knowing the data, setting clear goals, working to achieve them and removing barriers. Yet compared to other business and organisational priorities we are more likely to leave achieving our gender balance objectives to chance. Sharpening our focus and bringing our full management system to bear is essential.

ACTIONS

◆ Lead on gender reporting

Use the MCC reporting framework (aligned with Workplace Gender Equality Agency guidelines) to publicly and consistently report progress on gender representation and advancing women into leadership positions in your organisation. The goal is to create a more transparent, comparable and granular view of the pipeline and progress.

◆ Drive a supplier multiplier

Communicate to suppliers how important gender equality is to you. Encourage and support suppliers who prioritise the issue and drive change.

◆ Close the gender pay gap on like-for-like roles within your organisation

Use the [Closing the Gender Pay Gap report](#) to guide a pay equity review of like-for-like roles within your organisation. Use the report's tools and approaches to ensure there is equal pay for equal work within your team.

Disrupting the status quo



The status quo on gender balance can lead to low expectations of women's representation in the workplace. At times, we assume that the obstacles to women's advancement are inevitable or insurmountable. This is not the case, but we do not believe that standard approaches will be enough. We need to disrupt the status quo.

ACTIONS

◆ Address the merit trap in recruitment and promotion

Use our [In the Eye of the Beholder report](#) – developed with Chief Executive Women – to reassess how your organisation defines “merit” to ensure women are not being excluded from advancement opportunities due to out-dated or gender-biased notions of what it takes to succeed.

◆ Eliminate everyday sexism in your workforce

Review the MCC approach to [Eliminating Everyday Sexism](#) and adopt the list of leadership actions recommended to set the right tone on acceptable behaviour within your organisation.

◆ Mainstream flexibility

Shift the conversation on flexible work from “why” to “why not”. Work to mainstream flexibility by challenging perceptions about flexible work practices and where and to whom they apply. Introduce flexible working structures and practices which cater for both career and life-stage changes and preference.

◆ Actively sponsor women in your organisation

Research shows that women are “over-mentored and under-sponsored”. Personally sponsor women to succeed and ensure there are formal sponsorship programs in your organisation.

◆ Audit the public face of your organisation

Review how women are represented across your organisation, internally and externally (e.g. through your official spokespeople, advertising, online and social media profiles).

Dismantling barriers for carers



Traditionally, the most common route to professional success has not included career breaks and visible caring responsibilities. Many women's career trajectories plateau following parental leave events – people often assume women are more interested in a job, rather than a career. Jobs and career paths need to be redesigned with consideration to people with caring and career responsibilities, or the “double burden”. But there is a generational shift underway, with men wanting a greater role in caring. We need to support this for true gender balance.

ACTIONS

◆ Build environments where parents and carers thrive

Get under the numbers to see whether women returning from leave continue to develop their careers. Question deceleration and intervene when needed. Normalise caring for men through incentives and support.

Gender equality in society



The MCC is a powerful coalition of more than 150 leaders representing all sectors and communities. Together, we have the opportunity to step-up and lead the way on gender equality issues of societal significance – within our organisations and collectively externally.

ACTIONS

◆ Implement workplace responses to domestic violence

Gender inequality is both a cause and consequence of domestic violence. We realise that we can't champion gender balanced leadership without addressing domestic and family violence, whose victims are overwhelmingly women. We believe that every Australian can act to reduce the prevalence and impact of domestic and family violence. We hope you will join us. Our report [Workplace Responses to Domestic Violence](#) provides guidance on how leaders can ensure their organisations and cultures support those impacted, while also advocating for system changes to end the scourge of domestic violence in our community.