

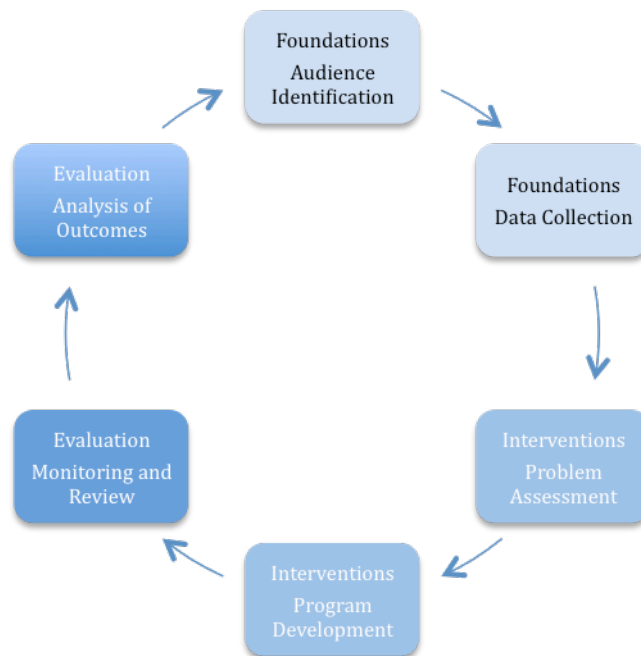
Gender Equity Framework

This analysis starts from the fact that the current ideal worker is someone who works full time (and often overtime) and who can move if the job “requires it”. This way of defining the ideal worker is not ungendered. It links the ability to be an ideal worker with the flow of family work and other privileges typically available only to men...“Success” requires ideal-worker status. Few women have it.

Joan Williams 2000

This framework is a work in progress that outlines an approach to organizational change that is built on the available evidence base. It is premised on the need to move beyond compliance with the equal opportunity legislative environment (taken as a given in higher education) to **focus on equality of outcomes**. This inevitably demands **systematic organizational cultural change**, ensuring that ‘women have no doors closed to them that are open to men’ (Cockburn 1991, 31). This is a move from ‘accommodation’ of women to ‘reframing’ the professional environment – a move that also calls into question conventional masculinities. (Williams, 2000, 271)

The framework utilizes the Advocacy and Policy Change Composite Logic Model developed by The Aspen Institute.



Equity implementation Cycle

The impact that is sought is **an improved professional environment** for women and men **that supports and rewards a diversity of individuals and groups** and **ends the sexual division of labour**. (Cockburn 1991; Williams 2000) The aim is to: acknowledge

and identify tacit values and assumptions that underpin established linear career norms ('the ideal higher education worker'); interrogate how these are reflected in policies and practices; and make explicit the value of supporting a broader range of 'ideal higher education workers' many of whom will have non-linear and/or interrupted career paths and a wider diversity of career destinations. The benefits of achieving greater diversity are well documented in terms of equity, productivity and innovation (Cutler & Co 2008; Gratton et al 2007). The greater challenge is to ensure that increased diversity is linked to excellence based on demonstrable improvement at all levels and in all disciplines enabling a greater range of higher education workers to attain success at the highest levels.

Laying the Foundations

The Audiences

Within the higher education environment there is an increasingly broad range of target audiences who influence the organizational culture. Identification of the key audiences is an important first step to acknowledge as communication strategies are developed. If initiatives are not framed in ways that connect with a diversity of critical audiences and generate wide ownership, change, particularly of entrenched academic and professional norms and values, will be difficult to achieve. Audiences are likely to include:

- Staff, academic and professional, and target groups within these eg female early career researchers, senior male leaders
- Senior women as role models, mentors and change agents
- Gatekeepers including professional associations
- Funding agencies
- Business and community leaders and
- Students (some of whom are also staff) who represent the next generation of higher education workers.

The initial focus should obviously be on the first two groups. There are some arguments for the early steps to be taken in a manner that instills confidence prior to external engagement (Baiylin 2003).

Data Collection

Each organizational profile is different and demands customized data collection and responses. However there are a number of well-documented patterns that point clearly to what we need to know. There are also a number of well-entrenched assumptions that may have been historically accurate but probably no longer hold especially since we began taking Learning and Teaching and 'Engagement' or 'Knowledge Transfer' more seriously in our appointment and promotions processes. A very good example is the well-documented perception that women are not selected or promoted as readily as men (Winchester 2006). The evidence is that in HE in Australia this pattern is changing (this does not mean there are not entrenched pockets of resistance or differences between disciplinary fields). However, women are more likely than their male colleagues to:

- have 'non-traditional' career paths (Stevens-Kalceff 2007; Diezmann & Grieshaber 2009);
- start their careers at lower levels (and many later) than men as RAs or at Level A (Probert 1998);

- begin their careers without a PhD and are less likely to go on to complete one (Probert 2005) although this is changing rapidly (Edwards et al 2009);
- publish less whilst undertaking a PhD (Dever 2009);
- publish less quantity but higher quality (Symonds et al 2006);
- pursue their careers less aggressively (Probert 2005) motivated by intrinsic rather than extrinsic factors (Dever 2009);
- have higher undergraduate teaching loads and lower post-graduate teaching loads (Probert 2005);
- apply for promotion less frequently than men (Probert 2005; Winchester et al 2006).
- spend more time on student welfare and pastoral care (including mentoring) (Probert 2005);
- have greater difficulty finding time for research when they are juggling carer responsibilities throughout their careers (caring for infants, teenagers, spouses and aging parents) (Probert 2005) and perform the majority of household duties (Diezmann & Grieshaber 2009);
- are, compared to men, differentially and negatively impacted by the 'culture of long hours' characteristic of the academic environment (Coates et al 2009; Cockburn 1991), and;
- fail to participate at levels comparable to men in the national competitive grant and fellowship processes (in both research and learning and teaching) that are critical to success and esteem (Bell & Bentley 2005; Bell 2009).

In short, many women do not fit the established expectations of the 'ideal higher education worker'.

Whilst Diezmann and Grieshaber (2009) find that there was no statistical difference between the number of female and male appointees to the professoriate (2005-2008) they did find that women are appointed two years later than males and significant proportions of women, according to Probert stop climbing prior to this 'as soon as they are getting to their peaks'. We need to understand more about this, but research suggests several factors that may be important: men are more likely to have supportive partners who are not in full-time employment (Probert 2005); the cumulative experience of negative discrimination coupled with the continuing influence of "the boys' club" (Diezmann and Grieshaber (2009); another is age profile and stage of career which we do not know enough about.

This paints a picture of small cumulative disadvantages consistent with the international research (see *Beyond Bias and Barriers* 2007 and Eagly and Carli *The Labyrinth of Leadership* 2007). We also know that mentoring and sponsorship have a significant positive impact (Blau et al 2010, Diezmann and Grieshaber 2009, Dever et al 2006).

This reinforces the imperative for any proposed program to be under-pinned by diagnostic data to develop an organizational specific evidence base. This will assist in targeting appropriate initiatives and addressing emerging policy and practice issues and will also provide a basis for monitoring and evaluation. The relevant data would include:

1. Patterns of attraction and recruitment: breakdown of applicants for positions advertised by role and gender (over past 5 years);
2. Selection outcomes: shortlisted applicants by role and gender; successful applicants by role and gender.

3. Following Ehrenberg et al 2009 it would also be useful to have a report on the composition of selection committees by gender, including gender of Chair.
4. **The current staff profile by: unit, position type and level, employment status (full-time; fractional); length of service, highest qualification, age and gender;**
5. Data on remuneration, workload patterns and access to resources and professional opportunities (such as overseas travel)
6. Data on retention (by level, unit, etc) to identify who is staying and who is leaving (together with destinations if known);
7. Promotion data by level and discipline/role;
8. Data on carer/family responsibilities;
9. Internal research and L&T grant participation and outcomes by gender;
10. Where relevant, external income by gender (given this forms the basis of performance assessment and ongoing employment in a research based institution for some staff);
11. Workload data where available, including the patterns of distribution of administrative workloads, inclusion/exclusion of pastoral care/mentoring and 'gendered' roles such as those that focus on student support eg First Year Advisors/Co-ordinators, Program Convenors etc;
12. Other?

Item 4 is the essential baseline data. If trend data is available this is an invaluable resource.

Interventions

Problem Assessment

The above data will provide quantitative indicators that will help identify patterns of gendered employment, potential target groups and variation across organisational units. To gain a greater understanding of organizational dynamics it may be useful to use one of the available survey tools see www.eowa.gov.au/Developing_a_Workplace_Program/Six_Steps_to_a_Workplace_Program

It might also be useful to conduct a small number of focus groups to map aspects of perceived organisational culture. The Organisational Maturity Framework (Crosby 1980, PWC/HEFCE 2004) is a benign tool that provides very useful enabling data that can be used to facilitate strategic conversations.

The maturity framework suggests a logical progression to demonstrate the progress being made towards the goals set, in this case to improve gender equity. Indicators associated with each stage identify where the organisation is in terms of the maturity framework. The framework helps make clear what works within the organisational culture and how this might be experienced differently by people in different roles and in different organisational units. It also enables the collection of qualitative data.

Program Development

A successful program will be developed with several broad aims in mind (Bell 2009):

- to reinforce the need for continuity where there has been success
- to strongly focus on the role of (male and female) leaders in taking responsibility for creating and maintaining positive organisational cultures, in part to ensure that change is holistic rather than piecemeal and 'to get the equality initiative placed in a high and secure position' (Cockburn 1991)
- to identify and remove barriers to women's career progression and success
- to sustain change, address and monitor the participation of women in relevant policymaking and decision making processes, and
- to improve the evidence base, share best practice and ensure that interventions are appropriately framed and evaluated.

Although each organisational culture is different, and demands close analysis, the research indicates that there are a number of critical dimensions to achieving the organisational change outlined above:

1. 'Top-level' commitment from senior managers and leaders, who take responsibility for linking the gender agenda to organisational goals and sustainability (PWC/HEFCE 2004, Bailyn 2003) together with identification and support of high profile male and female organisational champions (Bell 2009, Browning 2009).
2. The mapping of career paths to identify catalysts and inhibitors (Eagly and Carli 2007, Stephens-Kalceff 2007, Deizmann & Grieshaber 2009, Dever 2009)
3. The provision of support through mentoring (Devos 2005, Diezmann 2009, Blau et al 2010). See LH Martin Universities Australia Executive Women website <http://www.mihelm.unimelb.edu.au/mentoring/uaew/index.html>
4. Critical policy and process analysis (selection, performance, promotion, reward & recognition, and working conditions including leave provisions and flexibility) to identify and address 'inhibitors' (Winchester 2005, Dever 2006) including the impact of panel/decision-making committee composition (Ehrenberg 2009) and impact of performance timeframes.
5. Support for sustained structured networks, task-forces or committees that include men (Bailyn 2003, Cockburn 1991)

There is also evidence that interventions need to be multi-faceted. Eileen Byrne argues that 'the linear (and single dimensional) approach to intervention policies which characterised the 1980s and early 1990s, including the over use of short term projects, is ineffective, and should be replaced by a cluster approach, in which groups of factors, influences or issues need to be tackled simultaneously by policies which are related and planned as interacting'. (Byrne 1994)

Review and Evaluation

One of the key limiting factors in the research is the paucity of evaluation. As Byrne (1994) points out many interventions have been short-term projects, and even those that

appear to be successful are not evaluated. Wherever possible interventions should be structured so that relevant input and outcome data can be generated and analysed as a basis for continuous improvement. The different findings of the whole of institution (Probert 2005) and discipline based (Stephens-Kalceff 2007) studies of UNSW are instructive and point to the need for institutional monitoring of performance against indicators coupled with continuous validation through small scale studies.

Sharon Bell
LH Martin Institute
University of Melbourne
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