



Gender equality in management systems

- Would you like to improve your work with gender equality?
- Would you like to introduce a gender perspective in your operations?
- Would you like to have a good method for assessing the gender equality work in your company/organization from year to year and in comparison with other companies?

If you answered yes to these questions - read on about a newly developed method that can be used to:

- organize and evaluate gender equality work in workplaces,
- incorporate a gender perspective at all levels of operations,
- make gender issues a part of management's work





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Introduction

The method presented in this brochure is one of the results of the project Gender Equality in Management Systems. The aim of the project was to test and develop a method for evaluating gender equality work in various workplaces in co-operation with ten participating companies and other organizations.

Gender equality can be a quality that can be evaluated and rewarded. Good gender equality work must be carried out continually, and must be monitored, evaluated and changed just like any other activity. Using a certifying or marking system, organizations can create good procedures for this.

Project participants:





How to use the method

The method is based on an analysis of documentation following a number of criteria. Based on these criteria, work with gender equality will be assessed in seven different work areas. Each work area is then analyzed

following a structure that includes six procedural areas, based largely on the checklist of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman.

The method is designed using two dimensions

seven work areas:

- the external environment and mainstreaming
- working conditions and the workplace environment
- family life and work
- education and skills development
- recruitment and promotion
- salaries and benefits
- sexual harassment

six procedural areas:

- goals
- mapping
- measures and methods
- monitoring and auditing
- responsibility, delegation and involvement
- evaluation of management

How is the method used?

The method is used to evaluate each work area based on six procedural areas.

We describe how the method is designed, how it can be used and what it looks like in reality using “good practice ” that we found in the various areas.



Work areas

Each work area apart from “the external environment and mainstreaming” is built on the Swedish Equal Opportunities Act currently in force.

Procedural areas

These are used to make structured analyses and evaluations of the seven work areas given above. For each area, 0 to 10 points are awarded following an established assessment formula. The result for each organization will be a profile based on a matrix using these point-based evaluations. An organization will get an overall evaluation expressed in points and individual evaluations for each area. The organization can be awarded higher points in some areas and lower points in others. Each organization can then see what areas they are better in and what they are worse at. Results can be compared from year to year or with other organizations. By using the same structures, it is possible to evaluate several organizations with the help of existing documentation and basic data.

The six procedural areas are:

Goals

Goals are to be formulated in such terms that each one can be evaluated. This means that they should be clear and measurable or in some way can be monitored and analyzed. The goals should also be realistic, have a fixed date and be relevant.

Mapping

An up-to-date description of an organization’s position is a prerequisite for knowing what needs attention and whether action is required. This mapping allows the organization to evaluate the results of their work and any effects. It is important that the descriptions are based on current, relevant sources and that statistics for each gender are used. It is also important that the organization is aware of the attitudes and conditions of their customers, suppliers, employees, job applicants etc.

Measures and methods

Measures taken should be concrete, active and observable, and they should result in the achievement of the goals that were set. General formulations like “promote”, “work toward”, “stimulate” etc. are not acceptable. It is important to show how the organization intends to achieve its goals for every measure and who is responsible for ensuring that this happens.

Monitoring and auditing

This comprises the various ways of analyzing the results of the measures carried out. Do these actions result in the achievement of these goals? If not, then the monitoring or procedures will provide a basis for identifying deviations and indicate what corrections are required to achieve the goals (or perhaps whether adjusting/supplementing the goals is needed).



Responsibility, delegation and involvement

For each goal (mapping, measures, monitoring and evaluation) that is set and implemented, it should be expressed in clear terms what parties are responsible (who, what, when). Note that responsibility for complying with the Equal Opportunity Act always falls to the employer alone, while responsibility for ensuring that the work is carried out, monitored etc. is divided up among trade organizations and can be delegated to supervisors. In addition, all employees should be involved.

Evaluation of management

In this model, involvement and evaluation of management is the most important aspect. It is most important that the evaluation of management confirms that positive results have been achieved following set goals and have even surpassed these goals. This area has the same importance in every work area, but is only mentioned once here. The reason that an emphasis is placed on the evaluation of management is that it affects work in the organization to such a high degree. In accordance with the Equal Opportunities Act, management should carry out an annual comprehensive evaluation of the goals of the gender equality plan: how the goals are achieved and why, how the work is planned, organized and carried out, what new methods have been developed and applied and what resources – employees, time and money – have been used in the work.



The method in practice

How the method can be used in project groups

- Documentation in certain work areas is produced for the workplace. Examples of such documentation for the gender equality plan are the market plan, operations plan, chairman's report, quality policy, annual report, information policy, personnel plan, training programs, workplace surveys, reports on the organization's terms of employment, policy for performance reviews, staff discussions and workplace environment surveys.
- Documentation is evaluated and analyzed based on their given criteria by management, or by another person appointed working in the organization. Expertise in gender equality issues is needed to make this evaluation. Points are awarded following a given scale for each area. The points are compiled in a matrix. The organization gets its profile, an overall evaluation and individual evaluations in each work area.
- Gender equality experts take part during the course of the work, for feedback and evaluation
- Having several organizations/divisions work together is encouraged. There are positive effects for gender equality in measuring an organization not just on its own but alongside other organizations. Given that the requirements of the Equal Opportunity Act serve as a common

denominator, organizations and workplaces with widely varying activities and conditions can be compared with one another.

The method requires

- Long-term thinking and flexibility
- That there is gender equality expertise in the organization
- That resources have been allocated for someone to work with the method
- That the workplace documents its work



Example: The external environment and mainstreaming

This concerns the development of a gender perspective in an organization's core activities. This means in particular the work directed outside the company, at customers, suppliers, citizens, private individuals and other interested parties.

Goals

For the next year, a gender perspective is to be incorporated in the organization's day-to-day activities, especially activities that affect its external environment, like customer satisfaction, industry standards, sponsoring.

The gender perspective is used in planning and carrying out activities as well as producing results, for instance, working with both the markets division and customer service with qualitative and quantitative goals like ensuring that customer satisfaction is high, independent of gender. The goals are supported by employees and are used to renew the organization's services, products, treatment of customers etc.

Mapping

There are established procedures for developing market studies, customer surveys, quality studies, product testing, workplace environment surveys and similar analyses with a breakdown by sex. The company/organization makes use of gender equality expertise when necessary in connection with industry studies, research, the calculation of business ratios etc.

The customer register of the markets division and customer service, containing information about customer needs and customer satisfaction, is reviewed once a year from a gender perspective. When gender-related deficiencies in quality are discovered, these are always analyzed and recommendations are drawn up.

Measures and methods

A special quality representative and special gender quality expertise have been selected in every workplace. The task of the representative with gender equality expertise is to identify



areas where a gender perspective needs to be highlighted in quality work, for instance, involving a change in the range of products and services. Every representative and supervisor concerned undergo gender equality training in mainstreaming each year. Requisite resources in the form of time, employees and skills have been reserved in the regular budget.



Customer satisfaction from a gender perspective is taken up as a fixed item on the agenda of the markets division's workplace meetings.

All information, advertising and similar material geared to the external environment are checked by an employee with gender equality expertise.

Responsibility, delegation and involvement



Every employee with external contacts, like those responsible for markets, customer relations and information, is also responsible for

ensuring that externally-directed gender equality goals and ambitions are met and observed. Responsibility for gender equality has been assigned to the different supervisors working in customer service, external information and marketing. This entails special preliminary checking of externally-directed campaigns, surveys and activities from a gender perspective. This responsibility is included in the organization's gender and information policies that are in force.



A union representative responsible for co-ordinating the external environment and mainstreaming is included under the organization's agreement for employment involvement. The aim is to ensure that gender aspects are taken into consideration in employee involvement in the day-to-day operations.





Working conditions and the workplace environment

This concerns goals, activities, types of work and results that affect the life, health and psychosocial situation of employees and visitors to the organization.

Goals

The premises, offices, workrooms and tasks are designed in such a way that the physical and psychosocial workplace environment is good for both men and women.

There is good co-ordination in the regular work related to the workplace environment: mappings and plans of action. With these tools, it has become possible to influence and remedy conditions and attitudes in the workplace. The following rules apply.

Differences in employee stress and absenteeism have been noted in the organization. This is also true of customer safety. In both cases, differences have been found between men and women. The goal is to remedy such differences without delay.

Mapping

The physical and psychosocial workplace environment is mapped out, and a report is regu-

larly provided with a breakdown by sex. This is carried out under the framework for regular work on the workplace environment, by including special questions in the organization's surveys on the workplace environment, worksite visits, performance reviews and final reviews.

With the help of workplace meetings, annual performance reviews, surveys of the workplace environment, meetings with superiors and similar meetings, workplace environment issues are treated from a gender perspective.

Measures and methods

The gender perspective has been worked in as an item in the organization's policy documents, checklists, and similar reports that concern the workplace environment (for instance in workplace environment policy).

Qualified employees in the corporate health care field are brought in for cases of stress in the workplace. Employees in the workplace undergo ergonomic training which is adapted to both men and women.

The organization's policy for engaging corporate health care services, health care providers, external contractors, employment agencies and training instructors also has a gender perspec-



tive written into it. Gender equality in these contacts is observed both in the purchasing process and in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these contacts.



The organization of work has been developed continually in order to break traditional gender patterns and prevent gender differences in job comfort, absenteeism and risk exposure. Included in this development are job rotation and shared leadership, which have increased to include a larger share of employees.

Flexible work hours and a flexible assignment of responsibilities as well as opportunities for distance work, education and skills development have been promoted and are continually being developed from a gender perspective.

Monitoring and auditing



Monitoring is carried out continuously under the framework for the legal responsibility that the employer has to carry on active work in the workplace environment. Included in this re-

sponsibility is the requirement to acquire knowledge about the attitudes of employees, their comfort, absenteeism, work hours and rehabilitation, all reported with a breakdown by sex.

Responsibility, delegation and involvement



It is the task of the people responsible for the workplace environment, safety officers and employees responsible for visitors to live up to the gender equality policy, gender equality plan, workplace environment policy and laws in force. The goal is to have gender aspects observed as a routine part of workplace environment issues and business. Such work is delegated using the same principles as for the legally stipulated work for the workplace environment.





Family life and work

This concerns how operations and work are organized so that both men and women can successfully combine a family life and their job.

Goals

Goals are set to make it possible in practice for both men and women to take parental leave or take time off to care for a sick child. The goals also concerns taking time off to care for a family member.

No one will be treated unfairly in terms of payraises or promotion opportunities because of parental leave. On the contrary, such leave can be considered to be an asset.

Flexibility in work is used as an overall goal in combining a person's career and family life. Men and women who are the parents of small children are given priority in job rotations, shared leadership, opportunities for flexible work hours, shifts, distance work and absence from important meetings.

Mapping

The work hours and work flexibility of men and women are regularly mapped out and analyzed from a gender perspective. Internal training, important meetings, fitness activities etc. are scheduled for times that are also suitable to the

parents of small children. Fitness activities are scheduled during lunch hours and are encouraged.

In addition to annual employee statistics and frequent workplace surveys, family life issues are also mapped out through job interviews and final reviews for both men and women and through performance reviews prior to parental leave. Included in such mappings – for both men and women – is a report on the exercising of parental leave, time off for caring for a sick child and use of benefits and payraises in connection with this. The exercising of parental leave is encouraged and can be seen as an asset.

Measures and methods

The parents of small children are regularly given information from their place of work and some contact is maintained through special performance reviews and contact representatives (sponsors) in the workplace. Some will have the opportunity to work from home during longer leave periods.

Procedures are introduced for looking over the skills and payraises of people taking parental leave, for instance, through special reintroduction programs and remuneration for lost income as well as inclusion in negotiations.

In connection with negotiations on salaries and benefits, both managers and employees are encouraged to divide parental leave evenly between men and women.



Education and skills development

This concerns goals, activities, working methods and results in connection with men's and women's experiences with and opportunities for education and skills development at every decision-making level and area of operation.

Goals

Men and women are offered equal opportunities for education and development. When these are realized, procedures and methods are used to ensure that the content and teaching methods promote gender equality in the workplace.

In order to encourage the underrepresented gender to pursue a career in management or other type of development, a certain percentage of the men and women employed are to be offered special programs and support activities.

In all regular operations, educational and skills development training in gender equality is to be held frequently for all managers, supervisors, union representatives, other representatives and other employees with a special responsibility for gender equality issues.

Mapping

Gender equality aspects are to be continually surveyed in all internal training. Every manager/supervisor holds annual separate skills development/planning meetings with all subord-

inates. The results are compiled and analyzed by the person responsible for training who has gender equality expertise.

Measures and methods

Gender equality is included as a fixed item in the planning of the education and skills development of employees. This also holds for the principles and procedures used to inform and choose candidates for education and skills development among employees.

Men and women take part in the planning of activities, formulation of criteria and selection of employees for education. In such selections, priority is given to the underrepresented gender in cases of equal qualifications.

To encourage the underrepresented gender to pursue a career in management or other development in the organization, management training, mentor programs, temporary employee programs and trainee courses are offered. A majority of participants in these programs are to be from the underrepresented gender.

Responsibility, delegation and involvement

Those planning, carrying out and monitoring education and employee development have a special responsibility for gender equality.



Recruitment and promotion

This concerns goals, activities, working methods and results that are in connection with men's and women's experiences with and opportunities for recruitment, employment and advancement at every decision-making level and area of operations.

Goals

The organization of work is to be developed so that men and women are represented equally at every level and position.

A certain percentage of men and of women are always included in the candidate pool and chosen for recruitment, management development, temporary openings and similar opportunities. Employees involved in recruitment and promotion work are to always consist of equal numbers of both genders.

In certain areas of operation, there are specific goals:

- § the distribution of men and women in top positions corresponds to the distribution of employees
- § the distribution among any front office employees corresponds to the distribution among customers (this applies only if they promote gender equality, that is, a move towards a more even distribution between men and women).

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Mapping

It is also important to carry out final reviews and annual mappings of the need for labor and future recruitment and how many employees will retire, with a breakdown by sex.

The distribution of men and women is mapped at all levels and categories. The mappings are analyzed with the help of surveys and basic data on the attitudes, conditions and needs of employees, potential employees and former employees.

Measures and methods

Special plans of action, measures and programs are used to facilitate and guarantee the opportunities of the underrepresented gender for recruitment and promotion.

The underrepresented gender in operations is given priority in cases of equal qualifications in positions and workplaces that are dominated



by the overrepresented gender. Priority is also given in the distribution of labor, organization, temporary programs, appointment of project teams and chairmanships as well as in the hiring of external employees. This also holds for the distribution of chairmanships and secretaryships in working groups and in the appointment of boards, head deputies, outside assignments, project working groups etc.

Responsibility, delegation and involvement



Those planning and carrying out recruitment and promotions have an active responsibility for gender equality. This also holds for employees who work with information, advertising and marketing.



Salaries and benefits

This concerns the goals, activities, working methods and results of the work to prevent and correct biased differences in salaries and benefits among men and women. This also holds both within and between the same and similar positions, position levels and areas of operation.

Goals



A “zero vision” has been adopted, which means that there should be no biased differences between genders in positions and areas that are the same or similar. This holds both in connec-

tion with new recruitment and in promotions. This zero vision also holds for the distribution of financial benefits, bonuses etc. Employees are allowed to choose from among a broad range of such benefits based on their own needs/desires.

Mapping



Employee salaries (median and quartile comparisons etc.) are regularly mapped out and analyzed in order to discover biased salary differences between men and women.

Statistics on benefits for different position le-



vels and between different areas/places are also mapped out and analyzed with a breakdown by gender.

Work evaluations are carried out in parts of or for the entire organization. This also applies to mappings that may be required to identify criteria and procedures that result in biased salary differences, the weak bargaining position of certain professional groups in auditing and hiring, insufficient/incomplete classifications of the duties of professional groups etc.

Using work evaluations, external industry statistics, business ratios, surveys etc. (for instance from trade associations, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, Statistics Sweden etc.), analyses and comparisons with other com-

panies, organizations, government agencies, divisions and units are routinely carried out.

Measures and methods:

Knowledge and methods are continually developed and spread to discover and analyze gender-based differences in salaries and benefits between positions, work areas and workplaces that are the same or similar.

Gender equality aspects are considered as a fixed item in all negotiations, reviews etc.

In negotiations and audits, experienced employees are brought in to watch over and implement gender equality in the workplace. Special care is given in new recruitment and salary reviews during parental leave.





Sexual harassment

This concerns activities, working methods and results of the work to prevent and deal with all forms of harassment that can be related to gender.

Goals

The goal is a “zero vision,” that is, a workplace free from sexual harassment. No employee or person associated with the organization, for instance customers, should be subject to sexual harassment. For employees, this also holds for harassment as a result of reporting sexual discrimination.

There are procedures and routines to prevent all forms of sexual harassment and to guarantee that any incident is handled appropriately. There is a preventive plan of action and work is carried out in this area.

The organization is well-prepared to handle any incident, in the form of channels for contacts, information and treatment with the equal participation of men and women.

Education and changes in attitudes will lead to everyone being aware of the plan of action, its contents and the way to use it if necessary.

Mapping

Broad mapping channels have been set up to receive information about the occurrence of any incident and the attitudes of the men and women employed.

Sexual harassment is to be included in the questions asked in frequent workplace surveys and in final reviews.

The area is also mapped out through other workplace environment surveys, like worksite visits, and surveys carried out by corporate health care employees.

Measures and methods

A plan of action is set up to ensure that broad contact channels with easy access are available to all employees, so that it is possible, if necessary, to deal with sexual harassment immediately.

The plan of action ensures that the following steps are taken in connection with the handling of cases that arise:

§ good, fast and confidential options for dealing with the matter are available (through both official and unofficial channels)



- § personal support is given to all parties involved in such incidents
- § use of clear hierarchies of responsibility and clear sanctions with a focus on the person committing harassment

When a case arises, the psychosocial aspects of the workplace environment are analyzed as a basis for steps taken. Emphasis is placed on changing the work climate and the work organization.

Always remember never to confront the two parties (the perpetrator and the victim) with each other during the investigation.

Responsibility, delegation and involvement

Managers are responsible for ensuring that there is no sexual harassment in the workplace. Other people responsible for the workplace environment, counselors, safety officers, corporate

health care providers and fitness instructors have a similar responsibility for the special plan of action, the gender equality policy and the workplace environment policy and for ensuring that all laws in force are complied with.

In dealing with such incidents, managers and the other people mentioned above are responsible for establishing a dialogue with all parties involved and for seeing to it that there is a clear assignment of responsibilities and information available in every workplace.

Monitoring and auditing

Any occurrence of sexual harassment in the workplace is to be monitored continuously so that there is always up-to-date data available – with a breakdown by sex.





Background of the project

The method for gender equality work described in this brochure has been developed with the help of a number of companies and organizations involved in the project “Gender equality in management systems” in co-operation with the County Administrative Boards of the counties of Stockholm and Västra Götaland. This project came about because there was a need for a method and proper procedures for gender equality work.

Work in gender equality in these workplaces has been evaluated by a participating consultant after a number of criteria have been awarded different points, in part depending on how well documented the work in gender equality is and how far it has been carried out. The project has resulted in greater awareness of the quality of the work and an exchange of experiences among the participants. Several good examples can be taken from the project. These are described in more detail on the website www.jlsystem.com



Please visit our website, where you will find more detailed information about the project and its participants as well as information about who to contact.

www.jlssystem.com

You can also contact the following people if you have questions or comments.

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