

Internal and External Publication of Progress on Gender Balance

The Level Project



Accelerate Equality. Accelerate Success.

What's included?

This document discusses the considerations that should be taken into account for building and enhancing reporting of gender balance data. It will also look at considering an internal and external audience and what is required to communicate with both constituencies.

Introduction

It is not enough just to do the work to promote gender balance, you must also communicate what you are doing. One of the main reasons why this is important is to communicate to existing and prospective employees that you take gender balance seriously and are committed to driving change. The guiding principle on what you communicate should always be “Is this authentic?”. Some companies globally have received push-back from customers and clients where there is a perceived gap between what they say

they do and what they actually do. Framing your messaging around gender diversity will also allow your senior leadership team to be consistent about how they speak internally and externally about gender balance.

What to do?

If you have not yet started your work around building a more gender-balanced organisation then it can appear overwhelming to consider what you should communicate internally and externally.

Start here:

1. Conduct an analysis of your data¹ to review the overall representation of women in the organisation and then the representation by job level. This analysis should give you information on where women are under-represented in your organisation.

¹ Reference Data Analysis Template to conduct this analysis

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2. Benchmark your data. Review representation at the senior leadership level compared to other organisations of your type, size and sector. Typically you are aiming for at least 30% representation at each job band, however, if you are starting from a low level of representation then first determine why that might be so. Is it due to the industry in which you operate? Are women under-represented in that industry? If so, what are other organisations doing to support more women coming into the industry?

3. Conduct a stakeholder map. As you would with other initiatives, determine who needs to be informed, what do they need to be told, when and how you will communicate and how often. Appendix One illustrates how a stakeholder map might work; this is not an exhaustive list but it does give you a framework to add additional stakeholders.

4. Determine what you can share about the context of the data. Data alone will never give you the full story; think about what additional enquiry you can conduct in order to provide a full picture of the drivers of the data and how it might be influenced. For example:

- **State why this is important to the success of your business:**
 - i. “Gender balance is critical to our organisational strategy because_____” OR “We want to grow as a gender-balanced organisation and we know this will support our goal to enhance innovation, customer service and greater collaboration”²



GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

Many jurisdictions have now introduced gender pay gap reporting requirements. Ireland is due to enact this legislation in 2021. This will require companies of more than 250 employees to report their pay gap. In the UK, where this requirement was introduced in 2017, most organisations included an explanation of their pay gap and their action plans as part of their public requirement, however, this was not a requirement of the legislation and has been a continuing challenge.³ It is more likely that this will be a requirement in Ireland, so starting in advance of the requirement to analyse your data and frame your organisations story will leave you better prepared when the legislation comes into effect.

- ii. Use the findings from the resource “Linking D&I Strategy to Business Strategy” to inform this section of your communication
- **State your current position:**
 - i. “Our organisation is 50% men and 50% women”
 - ii. “Our senior leadership team is 10% women”

² Reference Linking D&I Strategy to Business Strategy

³ www.peoplemanagement.co.uk: why businesses should explain their gender pay gaps

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- **Highlight work and analysis already conducted:**
 - i. “We have determined that some of the reasons why more women are not represented at the leadership level are _____ therefore, we are committed to doing _____ to drive change in our business”
- **Be clear on your ongoing commitment:**
 - i. “We plan to track our progress over time to ensure that we are impacting representation in a sustainable way”

5. ALWAYS share and brief internally before any external communication. This may require some planning. Your organisation might have a regulatory requirement to report figures externally. If, for example, you are reporting gender pay gap information, there will be a deadline date by which this will need to be published.³ Plan to brief managers and leaders in your business before any public communication as they will be most likely to receive questions from employees. Remember that as well as preparing your data and narrative for an external audience, your existing employees will also see anything you publish externally so communicating to them and their managers is a priority.

6. You may also decide on internal-only communication. The purpose of this communication would be to be clear to employees about where you are now and what you are doing to improve the situation, a script similar to that illustrated in step 3 above could be leveraged.

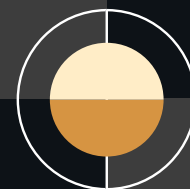
7. Authenticity is key. Do not communicate what you are planning to do until you have a plan in place. Lack of action on a commitment you have made will impact your credibility with employees. Your choice should be to go with fewer actions, which you can do well and report on progress.

8. Communicate updates often and through multiple channels. Keep your audience, internal and/or external, apprised of your progress. Talk about new programmes you are introducing, always linking it back to the strategic goals.

³ www.peoplemanagement.co.uk: why businesses should explain their gender pay gaps

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Appendix One – Sample Stakeholder Communication Matrix

Stakeholder Name	What	How	Frequency
Senior Leadership	Update your senior leadership team on data from your analysis and monitoring, and on qualitative actions being taken.	How does your senior leadership currently get communications on projects or key initiatives? Do they use a dashboard for communicating business priority status? If so, leverage their existing communication vehicle – including monitoring of progress towards gender balance as part of other business initiatives will support this work as being seen and treated like another business initiative. ⁴	Initially, as plans are being agreed this might be more frequently but typically communicating progress on a monthly or quarterly basis will be sufficient.
Board	Updates to the board should form part of their existing meeting schedule.	Align with existing board communication styles. Consider leveraging similar reporting as that provided for the senior management team. Communication to the board should also include actions that specifically relate to gender balance at the board level with a focus on succession planning for board positions with a gender balance objective.	Semi-annual
Employees	Agree the level of data that you are comfortable sharing with employees.	Provide employees with the data, the story that explains the data and with actions you will take to improve the data. ⁵ Use the ways you currently communicate with employees, for example, all-employee meetings, team meetings, emails, newsletters, intranet highlights, video messages from the senior team.	Align employee communications with the schedule of other employee messaging.
Clients	Clients can be updated proactively on your internal work or as they request information as part of contract meetings.	Most organisations will now include detail in their annual report on their work on organisational culture include efforts to address gender balance.	Annual or as needed

⁴ See sample dashboard in appendix two

⁵ See “script” in point 4 for determining communication message

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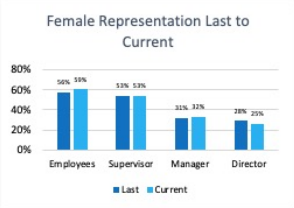


Appendix Two – Sample Gender Balance Dashboard

Detailed instructions on data calculations is included in [“Data Analysis Template”](#)

Gender Balance Dashboard – {Business Name}

1. Data monitor



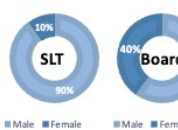
Provide commentary here on changes in data or key observations, for example, there is a drop in female representation from Supervisor to Manager level – this drop should inform actions underway

Hiring Rates			
Level	Female	Male	Diff
Director	0	0	0%
Manager	5%	7%	-2%
Supervisor	4%	5%	-1%
Employees	10%	9%	1%

Leavers Rates*			
Level	Female	Male	Diff
Director	0	0	0%
Manager	20%	0%	20%
Supervisor	1%	12%	-11%
Employees	6%	8%	-1%

Provide commentary here on the data on talent flows of hiring, promotion, and leavers. Commentary should be provided as an observation and not a judgement to ensure keeping senior leaders and those required to drive change on board

Promotion Rates			
Level	Female	Male	Diff
Director	0	0	0%
Manager	0%	5%	-5%
Supervisor	25%	40%	-15%
Employees	10%	9%	1%



2. Update on actions linked to data

Highlight here the status on key projects which are underway. Typically, what you choose to do should be aligned to areas which the data highlights as challenging. For example, in the data commentary provided on the left, it highlighted a drop in female representation from Supervisor to manager level, these actions focus on that cohort

Project 1 – Focus groups with women at Supervisory level

Sessions scheduled for each department and briefing drafts completed for review. Expect to complete all sessions by end of Quarter three will full report on findings and recommendations to be provided to this group during the Quarter four update.

Project 2 – Review of hiring pipeline to determine drop off points

Review underway focusing on hiring at “Employee” and “Supervisor” level where data demonstrates greater proportion of male hiring. Full report on findings to be provided Quarter three.

Project 3 – Review succession plan for Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Commenced review of succession plans with members of the senior leadership team to collate and analyze gender balance for future leadership opportunities.

3. Communications & Training Update

- Talking points for managers to use at team meetings created and distributed
- All-employee meeting completed to launch plan – follow up due at next quarterly meeting
- Employee newsletter drafted to highlight messages agreed in relation to gender balance
- Profile of senior female leader, Head of Sales included in newsletter
- Reminders regarding bias in performance management included in Performance Management mid-year training



4. Other updates

- Implemented balanced interview slates for all senior leadership roles
- Identified co-chairs to launch gender balance employee network
- Sourced training for newly formed committee of gender balance network
- Met with 30% Club to discuss becoming a supporter
- Identified senior women candidates for Board training