

Blueprint for Action

The business culture needs to be diverse and inclusive. Nevertheless, reaching this goal is not easy. Addressing performance evaluation and promotion processes can help in achieving this goal. Advance, a company investigating the status quo of corporations regarding gender diversity in Switzerland, found in their analysis that 65 percent of promotions go to men. They identified the need for transparent processes that address unconscious biases in those procedures which impact supervisors' decision-making. Those processes disadvantage women and lead to little female representation in all levels of the corporate hierarchy up to the executive board. We need new, objective, transparent, and structured performance evaluation and promotion processes if we want to transform the working environment. This "Blueprint for Action" provides you with a guide on how to implement a newly, proposed process that addresses the introduction of implicit biases, increases transparency, and fosters a feedback culture.





Be committed to the change

Commitment from the top to changing the status quo of performance evaluation and promotion processes is vital to create an environment of equal opportunities.

You as a company need to be committed to making systemic changes in your processes. This commitment needs to come from the top of the corporation to emphasise the importance of the change. McKinsey found in a recent study that most corporations are publicly committed to diversity and inclusion. However, "many companies have yet to adopt the systematic, business-led approach to D&I that is needed to translate these pledges into actual change" and a close look needs to be taken at the promotion and performance evaluation procedures. McKinsey further emphasise that most companies focus on establishing employee resource groups for D&I rather than giving supervisors and managers

responsibility for strengthening diversity. McKinsey states that companies need to make bold, systemic changes. Hence you need to truly commit to making big changes in your procedures, which will translate into an inclusive environment that provides everyone with the same opportunities and career chances. This is how you can set yourself apart from other companies who currently do not see the importance of changing entrenched performance evaluation and promotion processes in order to drive D&I. This can be done by adapting the new process proposed in this "Blueprint for Action to your company's needs and resources.



Acquire your diversity data

Every corporation has a different starting point when it comes to promotion and performance evaluation processes. Before you can start with the change, you need to know where you are and where exactly you need change to happen.

Diversity data is key. Numbers alone do not lead to change. Mercer emphasised in their research report that to move from pledges to action, you need to take an honest look at your diversity data to identify gaps and pinpoint areas of opportunity to be able to make evidence-based decisions on what to and do how to do it. Hence, you need to have a close

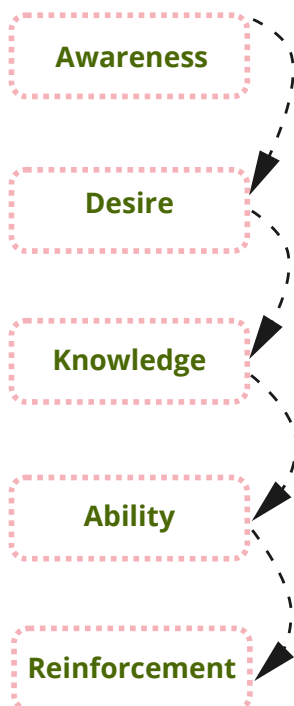
look at your diversity data in terms of performance evaluation and promotion procedures to identify where the gaps for improvement are and where you need to start off with the transformation. Through the analysis, you can identify the best strategy for implementation.



Define change management strategy

Changing an entrenched process in an organisation needs to be accompanied by a change management approach to ensure that every employee is committed to the change and sees the benefits in the new process - get people on board.

Before you start implementing the process, you should think about what change management strategy you want to accompany it with. Just implementing a new process can lead to resistance and a possible backlash from employees. It can also lead to supervisors not implementing the process in the way it was intended to be implemented, and hence the new process will not bear fruits. You can use an impact communication structured by an ADKAR Framework that revolves around building awareness, creating desire, building the knowledge and ability to facilitate the process, and reinforcing the change lead.^{*4}



Building awareness means clearly explaining the business drivers or opportunities that have resulted in the need for change. It also means addressing why a change is needed now and explaining the risk of not changing.

By creating desire in employees to participate in the change process, employees will be motivated and engaged and genuinely follow the new process's steps. This includes showing people why the change is good for THEM.

Knowledge is a significant part of the change process. Supervisors need to know how to change, what they need to do in the process and how to perform effectively in the future state. This means knowing what they have to attach importance to when facilitating the new process.

When you have given supervisors the knowledge of what they have to do and how they need to do it through training and workshops, you need to enable supervisors to facilitate the new process by providing them with sufficient tools for building their own ability throughout the process.

In order to keep the change going, you need to establish reinforcement mechanisms that motivate employees. It is our natural tendency to revert back to what we know. Therefore, you need to reinforce the belief that this new process will bring about change, improve the working climate, and transform the environment into a more inclusive workplace.

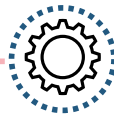


Define the change leaders

Defining the people responsible for making the change happen is crucial. Those change leaders should have the credibility and authority to engage employees in the change.

Before deciding on the tactics within the five steps of the ADKAR model, one or a few sponsors for change need to be defined. These sponsors stand up for the new process with their name and their credibility and are therefore identified as the change leaders. To implement this new process, it is recommended to define the change leaders as follows: CEO, D&I team members and HR Business Partner. The D&I team member serves as a credible source for diversity and inclusion

initiatives while the CEO shows that the top is committed to the initiative and that the whole corporation stands behind the new process. The CEO can also credibly demonstrate why the company is in favour of a new process that provides an equal environment and why this leads to equal chances for everyone. An HR Business Partner serves as a credible source for process leadership. This person can oversee the process and measure the results.

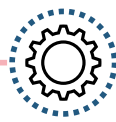


Implement the new process

Implement the proposed new process or adapt it to your organisational situation.

This proposed new performance evaluation and promotion process consists of nine thoroughly-thought steps that can be adapted to your situation. Throughout the research of the bachelor thesis "Women and Corporate Leadership" by Ivana Gubser, a trend was observed of companies moving away from old rating systems towards continuous dialogues for performance evaluation. Hence, the basis of the performance evaluation part of the process is a series of qualitative, face-to-face conversations throughout the year between the employee and their supervisor, which follow a clear structure. The process builds on six main

pillars; transparency, communication, objectivity, multiple perspectives, awareness, anonymity. All of those elements should be included in your new process, and through them, your performance evaluation and promotion system will achieve the overall goal of decreasing unconscious biases in decision-making. It will foster a feedback culture, build a trust base between the employee and their supervisor, and helps moving towards a more inclusive environment where everyone has the same chances and is evaluated and promoted based on performance. However, it is important to implement the process strategically.



Implement the new process



1

Unconscious Bias Test

Today most managers need to take an unconscious bias test when they are being hired. In this process, supervisors take the unconscious bias test every time before they go into the performance dialogues to be aware of their biases right before they need to discuss performances with their employees. This step reinforces the awareness of the omnipresence of unconscious biases in the workplace.

Awareness



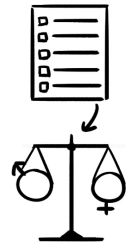
2

Multiple Performance Dialogues

Performance dialogues should be performed throughout the year in order to ensure continuous communication. The recommended amount is four times. Make sure the dialogue is clearly structured and emphasise the importance of transparent communication.

- Standardised checklist
- Show criteria for assessment
- Discussing performance
- Discuss wishes of the employee
- Illustrate clear career path
- Communicate company's needs

Transparency
Communication

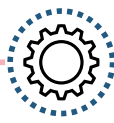


3

Write Review | Check for gender language

The performance review should be written on an online platform where all reviews are stored. This platform should also include a gender language checking tool that revises the written text when it notices that the language of the text is intensely masculine or feminine. Due to unconscious biases, these reviews may contain strongly feminised characteristics that later put women at a disadvantage when analysing the employee portfolio following a promotion opening.

Awareness



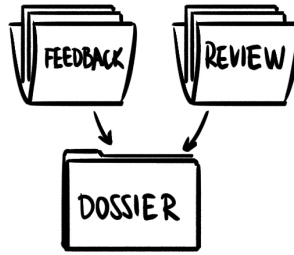
Implement the new process



4

Feedback from Colleagues

To introduce multiple perspectives on the employee, integrate diverse sources of feedback. One can do this by collecting reviews from work colleagues about the performance of the employee over the same online platform with the same language checking tool. Here, the employee can also write a review about themselves to have a say in their own performance evaluation.



5

Dossier Creation | Employee Checking

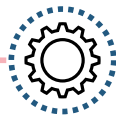
The online tool automatically creates a portfolio including all reviews about the employee. The employee should be able to access this portfolio to read the evaluation, ask further questions about it, or make comments on the individual feedback to both colleagues and supervisors. This step makes the evaluation process transparent and promotes the feedback culture of the team.



6

Promotion Opportunity

When a position becomes available, and hence a promotion opportunity arises it is important that it is not the supervisor alone that decides who gets promoted. In this process, he collects all the portfolios of employees that could potentially be suitable for the position and sends them to a decision-making panel.



Implement the new process



7

Decision-making Panel

The decision-making panel should be diverse in itself. It should contain equal female and male representation and further include people from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, etc. The panel consists of a Diversity and Inclusion Manager, a HR professional and, depending on the hierarchical level, a c-suite member or a different department manager. The supervisor discusses who should get promoted with the panel.



8

Interview

Depending on the situation, a further interview can be held with some employees that have been selected for the promotion opportunity. It is, however, also possible that the decision-making panel, together with the supervisors, decide on the spot who should get the promotion opening.



9

Feedback

Regardless of whether the employee received the promotion or not, he or she receives detailed feedback on the points discussed during the decision-making phase at the end of the process. The decision-making panel should write a protocol during the discussion. The supervisor can then discuss the content of the protocol with the employee. That way, the employee knows why the decision was made. This step further fosters the Feedback culture and enables a transparent process.

Objectivity
Multiple Perspectives

Transparency
Communication



Keep the main themes in mind

When restructuring your current performance evaluation and promotion process, always keep the main pillars in mind and implement the different elements into the steps of your new process. Even though anonymity is not part of the proposed process because it is hard to integrate for many corporations - think about it, try it. It can make a big difference in terms of equal opportunity provision!

**Transparency
&
Communication**

**Objectivity
&
Multiple Perspectives**

**Awareness
&
Anonymity**



Evaluate, Evaluate, Evaluate

Evaluating and measuring the results is key to continue with the process. It is vital to constantly acquire data about the implementation process to make evidence-based decisions on how to move forwards.

Throughout the implementation of the process, you need to collect primary data from staff, supervisors, and all change leaders. Ensure you know how people feel throughout the implementation. Find out whether people struggle with the new process, or if they feel unsure about the execution. All of those factors can lead to resistance from the employees' side and set you up for failure. Therefore constantly collect data about the execution of

to be able to react accordingly. Further, you should continuously collect data about the results of the process. Oversee whether the process changes the situation, whether the promotion rate is different and how the performance review differs from before. Lastly, share this data with the people involved in the change - all the change leaders and the employees. That is how you encourage the employees to continue with the change.