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About Diversity Council Australia

Diversity Council Australia (DCA) is the only independent, not-for-profit workplace diversity advisor to business in Australia. We offer a unique knowledge bank of research, practice and expertise across diversity dimensions developed over 30 years of operation. In partnership with our members, our mission is to: lead debate on diversity in the public arena; develop and promote the latest diversity research, thinking and practice; and deliver innovative diversity practice resources and services to enable our members to drive business improvement. DCA works in partnership with members to generate ground breaking high impact diversity research that drives business improvement through providing evidence-based guidance on how to fully leverage the benefits of a diverse talent pool.

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“ In 2016, Diversity Council Australia’s Annual Diversity Debate explored whether ‘engaging men’ is the game changer for gender equality.

‘Engaging Men’ is an idea that has gained a lot of popularity in recent years. DCA’s 2016 Debate highlighted how different the views are on the usefulness of engaging men, and on how best to engage men, so DCA wanted to take a look at the evidence about what actually works and why.

This resulting report is a critical contribution to this discussion. Dr Graeme Russell and Dr Michael Flood, two of Australia’s leading researchers in Diversity and Inclusion, take a look at the available evidence and provide 10 recommendations for organisations to adopt a more effective approach to engaging men to achieve gender equality at work.

The report also makes the point that while involving men in efforts to drive gender equality is important – it mustn’t be at the expense of women’s voices and it shouldn’t be viewed as ‘the magic bullet’.

LISA ANNESE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, DCA

PROGRAMMED

“ Programmed is pleased to continue our long standing partnership with Diversity Council Australia to help deliver this important research and contribute to the conversation about gender equality.

Understanding and drawing on the diversity of our people is at the heart of meeting the needs of our customers, building strong relationships across the communities we serve and engaging the many talents of the Programmed team.

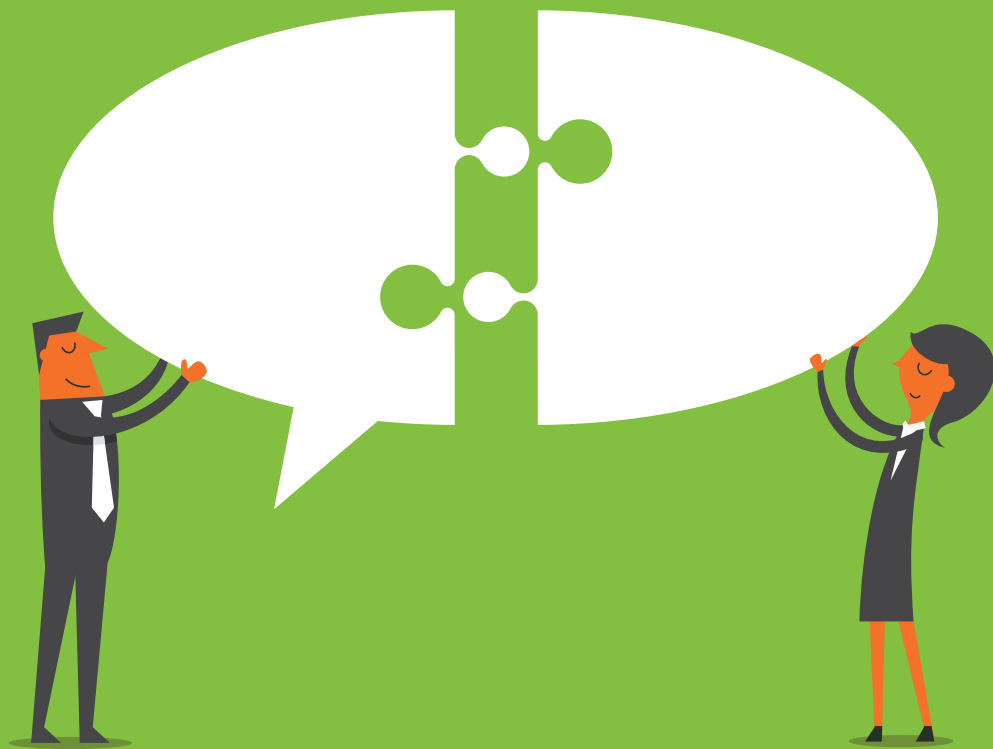
At Programmed, we’re committed to the pursuit of gender equity in pay and jobs across leadership, operations and trades roles. A purposeful approach to diversity and inclusion enables us to gain broader perspectives and insights to better serve our customers.

We seek to drive change not only within our organisation, but the wider community. To achieve gender equality, we need to engage men and women as active and equal partners.

One of the ways we’re trying to change the conversation is by encouraging boys and girls to consider a wider range of career possibilities regardless of social and cultural norms.

We are proud to sponsor this research and look forward to realising the opportunities it offers.

CHRIS SUTHERLAND
MANAGING DIRECTOR, PROGRAMMED



To change gender inequalities we have to involve men – but why? In short, because men are part of the problem of gender inequality and so they are therefore a crucial part of the solution.

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WHY THIS PROJECT?

There is heightened interest among organisations in engaging men in the gender equality change process.

After all, how can we drive change if we leave half the population out of the discussion?

But how much do we really know about the success of these initiatives and the most effective ways to engage men in gender equality?

Many initiatives and discussion seem to be taking place within a knowledge vacuum, overlooking existing research about gender, men and masculinity, and what works and what doesn't when it comes to individual and organisational change.

Drawing on the latest evidence and experience, this landmark report offers a set of recommendations for how organisations can engage men effectively to achieve gender equality at work.

GENDER INEQUALITY: WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

GENDER INEQUALITIES ARE EVERYWHERE

Gender inequalities are built into the systems and structures of our workplaces:

- Formally through policies and decision-making practices (e.g. denying promotion to part-time staff, as women are much more likely to work part-time than men), and
- Informally through norms and customs (e.g. 'cultural fit', 'merit', who gets included in or excluded in social and professional networks, language use, stereotypes, sexist and harassing behaviour).

Gender inequalities are also carried out by men and women at work:

- While only a minority of men engage in physical and sexual violence against women, many men, often without even realising it, practice other everyday forms of sexism.

MEN BENEFIT FROM GENDER INEQUALITY

Even if not intended or wanted, men receive benefits and advantages because of gender inequality.

For example, we know from research that:

- Male job applicants and staff are evaluated more positively than women,
- Men's views are given more weight, and
- Male leaders gain advantage of stereotypical associations between masculinity and leadership – 'Think Manager, Think Man'.

It can be hard to 'see' that our achievements and those of others may be in part due to unearned benefits.

Yet, because we are so used to these inequalities, men (and people from other privileged groups) may think that their achievements are only due to their efforts and skills – and not also to unearned advantages in an unequal system.

MEN MAY BE PART OF THE PROBLEM. BUT THEY ARE ALSO A CRUCIAL PART OF THE SOLUTION.

We will not make much progress towards gender equality without men's support.

Not because women are weak and can't do it on their own. Not because men have been left out and are now the victims. No, but because men are part of the *problem*.

How men think, behave, and how they relate to women and to other men, all play an important part in keeping gender inequalities alive. Men's attitudes and behaviours may support the sexist status quo.

Men have a vital role to play in building a world of gender equality – and many already are doing so.

- Some men respect and care for the women and girls in their lives and they reject sexist norms about 'being a man'
- Some men play a public role in fostering gender equality, as advocates in businesses and trade unions, or supporters of violence prevention campaigns such as the White Ribbon Campaign.

And there is much more that men can do.



WHAT IS 'EVERYDAY SEXISM'?

- **Evaluating women less positively** than men (e.g. in job application and promotion processes)
 - **Ignoring and talking over** women
 - **Sidelining women** in social and work networks
 - **Calling women "girls"** but not calling men "boys"
 - Criticising others for **acting "like a girl"**
- Comments that women **are not as good as men at certain things** (maths, sports, cars, leadership) or that they are too easily offended
- **Seemingly harmless comments about women**, such as that they are naturally better at collaborating, detailed work, child care, cooking or shopping
- **Not offering women work opportunities** out of misplaced concern that they may not be able to manage it (e.g. assuming that women can't travel or work in male-dominated or heavy industries)
- **Choosing women for stereotypical assignments** or tasks such as taking meeting notes, getting tea or coffee or cleaning up the room after meetings
 - **Unwelcome remarks** about a woman's body or clothing

WHAT'S IN IT FOR MEN?

<p>MEN GAIN WHEN WOMEN GAIN</p>	<p>Because gender equality is good for women and girls, it is good for men too. Men and boys share their lives with women and girls – their wives and partners, sisters, daughters, mothers, aunts, friends, co-workers, and so on. The quality of every man’s life depends to a large extent on the quality of those relationships. Men gain when the women and girls around them have lives which are safe and fair.</p>
<p>WELL-BEING</p>	<p>Men’s own well-being is limited by narrow ideas about how they are “supposed” to behave. Men often pay heavy costs – in the form of shallow relationships, poor health, and early death – for conformity with narrow definitions of masculinity.</p> <p>Feminism gives men greater choices about their working and family lives by questioning narrow, restrictive gender roles for women and men (e.g. women must be the full-time stay-at-home carer and men must be the full-time breadwinner).</p>
<p>RELATIONSHIPS</p>	<p>Gender equality is good for men’s relationships and sexual lives. US research finds that men with feminist partners report greater relationship stability and sexual satisfaction than men with non-feminist partners.</p> <p>In turn, feminist men are good for women. Women with feminist male partners have relationships with greater quality, equality, and stability and greater sexual satisfaction than women with non-feminist male partners.</p>
<p>FRIENDSHIPS</p>	<p>Gender equality is good for men’s friendships, as it reduces the pressure on men to be stoic and avoid emotion, making more room for friendships with other men and women which are intimate and supportive.</p>
<p>PARENTING</p>	<p>Men also benefit from active involvement as fathers in their children’s lives.</p>
<p>COMMUNITIES</p>	<p>Gender equality is good for our workplaces, communities, and country. Gender progress benefits the communities in which men live. Our communities benefit from flexibility in divisions of labour, improvements in women’s health and well-being, reductions in violence against women, and other signs of growing gender equality.</p>
<p>DIVERSITIES</p>	<p>Gender equality also tends to open up room for diverse sexualities, creating greater space for same-sex and queer relationships and communities.</p>
<p>WORK EXPERIENCES</p>	<p>With progress towards gender equality in workplaces, men will enjoy workplaces with greater productivity, creativity, and diversity because of the wider pools of talent and fairer processes on which they are based. Men will also experience higher quality work resulting from greater teamwork and collaboration and a reduced emphasis on competitiveness. Finally, men will benefit psychologically from being active participants in the process of positive change.</p>



'Engaging men' is **not a 'magic bullet'** for gender equality



Maintaining women's initiatives and women-focused approaches is vital



Avoid putting men on a pedestal for being actively engaged in gender equality



Engage men at every level in your organisation – not just at the top

LESSONS LEARNED

The 'engaging men' field has become increasingly sophisticated as it has developed. There have been productive debates regarding how best to involve men in change and a shift away from some simplistic assumptions and approaches. There have also been some important lessons learned:



Men are not all the same – recognise their diversity (e.g. men's different cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, disability status etc)



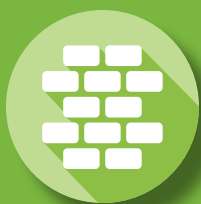
Encourage men to **make personal change**, rather than only champion organisational change



Drive organisational change by changing gender-biased systems, policies, and practices

10 PRINCIPLES FOR ORGANISATIONS TO EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE MEN ON GENDER EQUALITY

What are the principles which will increase the effectiveness and impact of efforts to engage men on gender equality at work?



Get the foundation right – Ensure gender equality initiatives involve women and men as active and equal partners



Get the framing right – Treat gender equality as a business issue, not a women's issue



Engage a diversity of men – including men in different organisational roles and levels, and with a variety of demographic backgrounds (e.g. ages, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations)



Go wide – Make visible and target all key gender equality areas (i.e. paid work, power and decision making, financial security, personal safety, interpersonal work relationships, caring, and community involvement)



Get the messaging right – to appeal to men as well as women



Educate about how to lead change effectively – by resourcing initiatives, being visible and persistent, and 'walking the talk'

Because men at the higher levels of workplaces can take for granted their gender and leadership positions and their acceptance by masculine establishments, research shows they are more able than women to act as public champions – they are often perceived positively, while the reverse is true for female champions of gender equality.



Make the connection between work and home – by implementing initiatives that encourage gender equality in caregiving



Make the connection between work and communities – by framing gender inequality as a societal/community problem

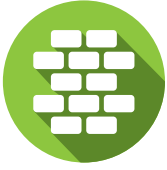


Build individuals' gender confidence and capability – by providing opportunities for both men and women to change their mindsets, assumptions, and behaviours



Encourage men and women to challenge and change gender-biased organisational policies and practices





GET THE FOUNDATION RIGHT – WOMEN AND MEN AS ACTIVE AND EQUAL PARTNERS

Ensure that any gender equality initiatives involve women and men as *active and equal partners* – active in advocating, being role models, and being change agents.

Equal Decision-Making: CEOs for Gender Equity (CGE) adopt a leading practice approach to championing gender equality in which women and men work together to drive change through sharing voice, visibility, and participation. CGE’s leadership includes Her Excellency, the Governor, Kerry Sanderson AO as Patron, and Chris Sutherland, Managing Director of Programmed, as Chair. Female CEOs currently represent 33% of their membership, more than double the state and national averages, and CGE is publicly committed to changing these numbers for the better.

Equal Voice in Speaking Engagements: Following on from the Male Champions of Change’s Panel Pledge, Telstra has introduced speaker forms that state: *“Our CEO David Thodey is a member of the Male Champions of Change. As part of this, we are committed to ensuring that events we participate in are gender balanced. Please take this into consideration when submitting your request.”*¹

Equal Voice in Change Initiatives: Linfox and Women’s Health Victoria partnered to conduct the *Working Together Against Violence project*, which aimed to strengthen the organisational capacity of Linfox’s male-dominated workplace to promote gender equality and non-violent norms. Importantly, the training was conducted by a male and female facilitator working together to model respectful relationships.

Equal Leadership Opportunities: Implement the *Plus One Pledge*² where men at all levels pledge to add at least one woman to their team when roles become available. Significant numbers of men have taken this pledge in a range of organisations, and this has resulted in an increase in the number of women in senior roles in participating organisations.

1 Adapted from *Gender Balance at Every Forum: Panel Pledge*, Male Champions of Change, Women’s Leadership Institute Australia & Chief Executive Women.

2 Search ‘Plus One Pledge’ on YouTube.



GET THE FRAMING RIGHT – A BUSINESS ISSUE, NOT A WOMEN’S ISSUE

Ensure that gender equality is framed as a business issue, and not simply as a women’s problem in which initiatives focus (intentionally or unintentionally) on ‘fixing’ women. This requires that gender equality is an integral part of your business strategy.

Develop a business-focused gender equality strategy: Use the Workplace Gender Equality Agency’s (WGEA) Gender Strategy Toolkit on its website to step you through building a gender equality strategy that aligns to your business.

Align your gender equality strategy with your business strategy

“At Deloitte, we view diversity and inclusion as central to our firm’s culture and our ability to tackle our clients’ most complex business problems.” – Cindy Hook, CEO, Deloitte Australia

“At Programmed, the diversity of our people is one of our great strengths. We aim to create an inclusive environment and recognise the value of attracting, engaging and retaining employees with different backgrounds, experience and perspectives. Understanding and drawing on diversity is at the heart of meeting the needs of our customers, building strong relationships across the communities we serve and engaging the many talents of our team.” – Chris Sutherland, Managing Partner, Programmed



ENGAGE A DIVERSITY OF MEN

Engage with the diversity of men in the organisation – men in different organisational areas and levels, and from a variety of demographic backgrounds (e.g. ages, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations etc.)

Craft messages which will engage and inspire a diversity of men on a diversity of topics

For messages about shared caring and flexible work, take a look at WGEA’s *Equilibrium Man* Campaign or *The Guardian’s Father’s Day* video.

For messages about pay equity, try Audi’s *#Driveprogress ‘daughter’* video.

Draw on a diversity of advocates, educators, and spokespeople

Try connecting with key stakeholder groups to tap into and connect with a diversity of men (e.g. Australian Employers Network on Disability, Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia, National Centre for Indigenous Excellence, Pride in Diversity).



GO WIDE – MAKE VISIBLE ALL KEY GENDER EQUALITY AREAS

When developing your Gender Equality Strategy adopt an expanded framework that targets the full range of key gender equality areas.

Ensure your strategy targets:

 <p>Gender equality in all roles (paid work)</p>	 <p>Gender equality in leadership (power and decision making)</p>
 <p>Gender equality in remuneration and reward (financial security)</p>	 <p>Gender equality in community involvement</p>
 <p>Gender equality in caring</p>	 <p>Safe, respectful and gender inclusive work environment (personal safety and interpersonal work relationships between women and men)</p>



GET THE MESSAGING RIGHT – TO APPEAL TO MEN AS WELL AS WOMEN

Craft messages which inspire men's engagement and commitment.

Appeal to...

Men as bystanders – to men's ability to speak up about and intervene in sexist behaviour and attitudes by other men (and women)

Men as allies to women, including as friends and colleagues

Men's sense of fair play – this has been shown to work in motivating men to support gender initiatives

Men's care and concern for the women they know, such as female family members, friends, and colleagues

Emphasise...

That other men agree, that most men support efforts towards gender equality, but often but do not know what to do

That men have a valuable role to play, without minimising the reality of gender inequalities or men's sexist behaviour

A sense of fairness – principles of fairness, equality, justice, and equal opportunity

Encourage engagement for social justice reasons – not only self-interest

Encourage men to shift from engaging on gender equality for paternalistic reasons, and with a limited focus on 'other' and 'bad' men, and little sense of wider inequalities.

Instead, encourage men to become allies for social justice, in which they have strong justice-oriented motivations, acknowledge their own privilege and complicity, and recognise that gender inequalities are embedded in our workplaces, our homes, and our social, cultural and legal institutions.



LEAD CHANGE – EFFECTIVELY

Many organisations rely on executive leaders, in particular male executive leaders, to be ‘champions’ for gender equality, but this is not enough.

In some ways men are more able than women to act as champions because they can take for granted their gender and leadership positions and their acceptance by masculine establishments. But, focusing only on male ‘champions’ can inadvertently further entrench male-dominated leadership.

Also, if having individual champions is the only strategy adopted, it can suggest that equity is merely a personal value rather than the responsibility of all leaders and part of the mandate of the organisation.

“Our vision is to boost women’s workforce participation, lift productivity and increase economic growth by sustainably improving gender equity in jobs and pay in enterprises throughout Western Australia.”

Eighteen of Western Australia’s most influential CEOs launched CEOs for Gender Equity at Government House in 2014, when statistics showed that nationally, Western Australia has the lowest female representation on boards and the highest gender pay gap.

The Equal Opportunity Commission prompted the formation of the inaugural group of CEOs in 2012 and has seen it grow to represent CEOs from the corporate, not-for-profit and government sectors.

The initiative aims to grow awareness of gender inequity and its impact when addressed, as well as set an example for other enterprise leaders who want to bring about change within their workforce.

Ideally, a leading practice approach to championing gender equality enables women and men to drive change through sharing voice, visibility, and participation. CGE’s approach reflects leading practice through its focus on striving for gender balance in membership:

- CGE’s leadership includes Her Excellency, the Governor, Kerry Sanderson AO as Patron, and Chris Sutherland, Managing Director of Programmed, as Chair.
- Female CEOs currently represent 33% of their membership, more than double the state and national averages, and CGE is publicly committed to changing these numbers for the better.

Pay attention to resourcing

“We need more decent, powerful men to step up beside women in building a gender equal world.”

The *Male Champions of Change* initiative has achieved widespread and ongoing recognition and take-up in part because it is well-resourced, and each participating organisation has its own committed and visible CEO as well as a dedicated implementation leader.



MAKE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WORK AND HOME

Implement initiatives that encourage gender equality in caregiving.

Introduce shared care policies

Aurizon has designed a highly innovative policy that expands the child care options for staff. It involves providing a financial incentive based on half-pay for a partner to stay at home and care for their child in their first year, and for the Aurizon staff member to return to work full-time. This policy is inclusive of all parents including same sex couples, single parents, and both birth and adoptive parents.

Use DCA's *Men Get Flexible!* Report and *Future-Flex* tools

These tools are designed to assist practitioners and managers, teams, and individuals to mainstream flexible work and flexible careers for both men and women.



MAKE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WORK AND COMMUNITIES

Link to, and change, communities by framing gender inequality as a societal/community problem.

Take action on family violence

In 2015-2016, 64 workplaces went through White Ribbon Australia's Workplace Accreditation Program, more than 200 worked towards accreditation, and a further 800 organisations have expressed interest in becoming accredited.

Contribute to community discussions about gender equality and social policy

Programmed is committed to increasing the representation of women in leadership and to attracting women in trades and operations. This is achieved in part by Programmed's advocacy on women in science, technology and trades, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers. Its Managing Director was a founder of CEOs for Gender Equity in Western Australia and leads its STEM education stream to encourage more girls to consider these careers. Programmed also sponsors the Committee for Economic Development of Australia's Women in Leadership Series at which its Managing Director has participated on panels discussing gender segregation particularly in relation to STEM careers.



BUILD INDIVIDUALS' GENDER CONFIDENCE AND CAPABILITY

Provide opportunities for both men and women to engage in *individual* change (in their own mindsets, assumptions, and behaviours).

Increase people's sensitivity to sexist language

Use DCA's [Words At Work](#) Guidelines to show what sexist language can look like and the significant negative impact it can have at work. The Guides also provide suggestions on how people can 'have the courage to call it' when it comes to sexist words at work.

Increase people's sensitivity to male privilege

View BuzzFeed's Privilege videos – the [US](#) and the [Australian](#) versions, or participate in DCA's knowledge program called *Privilege: What's in my invisible backpack?*

The term 'male privilege' can be contentious. But it needn't be. Most people understand gender inequality in terms of *female* disadvantage, and the flipside of this disadvantage is men's monopoly or dominance of economic and political life. This is male advantage or male *privilege*.

Educate about gender stereotyping

View Programmed's [It's Up To You](#) video

As part of Programmed's strategy to change behaviours, they produced this video which features three of their female employees in trades or AFL careers.

Educate about 'dripping tap' sexism

You can watch [Laura Bates' TED talk](#) on everyday sexism to learn more about the prevalence of everyday sexism.

Create an inclusive leadership model, which lists gender-inclusive leadership behaviours

Integrate DCA's five factor model of [Inclusive Leadership](#) into your organisation's own leadership model: Identity Aware; Relational; Open & Curious; Flexible & Responsive; and Growth Focused.



CHALLENGE AND CHANGE ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES – THROUGH ACTIVE AND EQUAL PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Men (and women) need to engage in organisational change, including changing *organisational* systems, policies, procedures, and practices.

Assumptions about gender (e.g. that women are more caring and have better relationship skills than men do) that are built into organisational policies and practices can affect gender equality.

Redesign workplace systems so they are based on gender equality principles

KPMG identified that there was an absence of women in senior positions and that despite a women in leadership strategy being in place, a lack of explicit prioritisation and insufficient articulation was limiting its impact. KPMG took action – systematically reviewing the promotion process. KPMG’s CEO was closely involved as the program sponsor and, if gender balance was not being achieved, personally intervened to challenge the Partners to ‘go back and try again’¹.

Establish ‘advocate and ally’ programs in which men (and women) can act as public advocates for gender equality – and do so together in active partnership

To help improve gender balance in STEM disciplines, a US university created a male advocates program. Working alongside female staff members, male staff advocated for gender equity on campus. The men were identified through an application and interview process. In regular meetings, they participated in (a) a program of reading and discussion, through which they participated in self-education and eventually created training modules for other men, and (b) contributed to gender equality events on campus. The program generated valuable insights on how to engage and involve men in advocacy for gender equality.²

Design immersion experiences that include both women and men to enable both to understand better how norms and assumptions about men and women create gender inequalities at work.

In 2014, Dan Priems, Warrant Officer Class Two, swapped his life managing an Army maintenance workshop to work at DCA as part of the Australian Army’s Outplacement program. Go to DCA’s website to read Dan’s revealing and insightful [blog](#) on his immersion experience.

1 Chief Executive Women (CEW) and Male Champions of Change (MCC), *In the Eye of the Beholder: Avoiding the Merit Trap*, Sydney, CEW & MCC, 2016

2 C.L. Anicha, A. Burnett, and C. Bilén-Green, ‘Men Faculty Gender-Equity Advocates: A Qualitative Analysis of Theory and Praxis’, *The Journal of Men’s Studies*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2015, pp. 21-43

OUR METHODOLOGY

To develop these evidence-based guidelines we drew on the following main data sources:

1. The significant and long standing body of research on men and gender equality, including research examining:
 - The link between gender equality at work and in caring
 - The influences of masculinity and male privilege on social and work institutions and gender relationships
 - The processes of change for men in taking action to prevent men's violence against women
 - The processes of change for men when becoming active fathers and sharing caregiving.
2. Our own extensive experience assisting organisations create more gender inclusive and gender equitable workplaces.

FIND OUT MORE

DCA members can access the full Report by logging into the Members Only area of the DCA website. The full Report includes detailed information on:

- The case for engaging men around gender equality
- What organisations are doing to engage men on gender equality
- How organisations can effectively engage men
- Case studies and practical examples
- Web resources and recommended readings
- Research references.





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