



Women in Capital Markets Design Sprint

Teaming up with Women in Capital Markets (WCM), the Institute for Gender and the Economy (GATE) hosted a design sprint on October 1, 2018, with 15 teams of Rotman MBA students to develop solutions for one of capital markets most persistent challenges: **career longevity for women.**

Research shows that women enter capital markets at a slower rate compared to men, but leave much faster. Many banks and financial institutions have tried to implement solutions to 'fix the leak,' but haven't been successful.

With help from the Rotman Women in Management Association and Rotman Finance Association, WCM and GATE developed a challenge that used design thinking and empathy to encourage students to propose solutions focused on influencing structural change in capital markets.

The challenge question:

You have complete control to design the ideal capital markets workplace. How might you design this workplace so that Dee (user persona) could develop a long-term and meaningful career?

We received many outstanding ideas in response to this challenge, primarily centred around creating a more inclusive environment for everyone. These ideas are summarized in the following brief.



Pictured: WCM Design Sprint Winners, Team 6
From left to right; Asli Zayim, Franklin Tafadzwa
Gumeyi, Jack Shi, and Yurisleidy Zoreda Vazquez

The Finalists

Four teams were nominated for the finals. Their ideas ranged from introducing roles within capital markets to signal the importance of diversity and inclusion, to an application that distributed work equitably among team members to create improved flexibility and performance measurement.

All four ideas are listed below.



Workload Delegation Tool

A software that distributes new work based on bandwidth, priority, and capability. This will ensure that one team member isn't overwhelmed by the work on their plate and every employee's work is visible, accounted for, and recognized.

Dialogue Committee

A group responsible for creating opportunities for open discussion among teams, managers, and organizational leaders. By having conversations between groups, we can move towards progress.

Stretch Project for Associates

A capstone project for early-career Associates that showcases both their soft and hard skills. Projects provide an opportunity for meaningful and actionable feedback early, and can create a platform for improvement and insight.

VP Gender Risk Management

A new role that focuses on increasing diversity within capital markets as a risk deterrent. This position's mandate would be to engage with diverse teams in order to improve return on investment, and promote inclusion in the workplace.

 Winning idea

Additional recommendations

In addition to our finalists, 11 other teams pitched their ideas. These teams identified four areas of opportunity in the capital markets industry, and indicated that if these areas are targeted, and current challenges are remedied, capital markets can foster a more inclusive culture. This will not only elongate the careers of women, but also attract and retain a more diverse workforce.

Flexible work: Building a culture that works with and for people, at all stages of their lives. Examples of flexible work policies are:

- Remote work
- Deal's done! flex days
- Equitable parental leave policies
- Use it or lose it parental leave
- Parental leave and vacation credits

Leadership and change ownership: Living the values that we espouse is key to making an impact. Examples of leadership and change ownership are:

- Director of Diversity and Inclusion
- Dialogue committee
- Round table discussions
- 360 degree feedback mechanisms
- Culturepulse checks

Experiential learning: Engaging teams across departments and building skills across the organization allows us to learn from one another. Examples of experiential learning are:

- Rotational programs
- Buddy Program across teams and roles
- Reverse mentorship
- Early stage recruitment: Capital Markets High School program
- Office Powers Program: earn points to engage with leadership

Equitable and transparent incentive structures: Ensuring incentive practices reflect the desire for equality builds trust and signals authenticity. Examples of these structures are:

- Restructure bonuses to include diversity and inclusion incentives
- Annual pay audits including bonuses for all staff

Thank you to all of the participants, coaches, and judges!

If you'd like to learn more, you can visit GATE's website at gendereconomy.com or visit WCM's website at wcm.ca