

INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND THE ECONOMY

INDUSTRY PARTNER WORKSHOP

OCTOBER 29, 2018

How we're changing the conversation

The Institute for Gender and the Economy (GATE) at the Rotman School of Management promotes an understanding of gender inequalities and how they can be remedied-by people of all genders-in the world of business and, more broadly, in the economy.

At GATE, we use rigorous academic research produced by our [research fellows](#) and [research grantees](#), as well as knowledge translation through our events and digital resources, to change the conversation on gender equality.



Why we need you

Changing the conversation on gender equality requires the whole community, and we believe that our industry partners are central to that community.

Let's continue working together to create, lead, and manage change.

More specifically, we need you because:

- Great academic research needs access to internal, organizational data.
- Innovative companies are fantastic testing grounds for new research insights.
- Businesses are experimental and move quickly, and are thus an integral part of finding innovative solutions to gender-related issues.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM OUR INDUSTRY PARTNER WORKSHOP

Breaking down bias: Keynote by Dr. Jamillah Bowman Williams

- Most people believe we need a business case for diversity in order to make change, but experimental studies suggest that the legal case is actually more powerful.
- The legal case for gender equality utilizes civil rights language which may trigger moral beliefs in individuals and thus promote more equitable decision-making.
- Making a broad and generic business case risks creating tokenism, backlash, and pigeonholing. The business case can work, but only if it is targeted to very specific situations.
- Law has a normative value in driving change, even if enforcement is poor.

The promotion gap

- Practical recommendations for improving women's career outcomes focus on asking them to "lean in," but evidence suggests that systemic changes may be more effective.
- In particular, by looking at "choice architecture" (the ways choices are presented to people), we can see how default options may lead to the gender gap in promotions.
- For example, the current standard in promotion practices is for employees to "opt-in" (actively apply) for a promotion, but if organizations move to an "opt-out" standard (employees must remove their application) minority candidates are more likely to be promoted.

Flexible work policies

- Traditionally, flexible work policies are developed with "motherhood" in mind, and therefore can lead to gendered outcomes.
- Typically, women take advantage of flexible work policies through official means (e.g. filling out paperwork with HR), while men are more likely to do so unofficially (e.g. using sick leave or leaving early). Therefore, women are more often penalized for taking advantage of these policies when it comes to their evaluations or promotions.
- Individual managers play a crucial role in making flexible work practices acceptable. Tone from the top is important, but middle managers are the gatekeepers.

Pay transparency

- Recent highly publicized laws on pay transparency (e.g. UK, Iceland, as well as current conversations in Canada) suggest that pay transparency should reduce the gender wage gap. However, this hypothesis is not yet supported by much research.
- A new project is examining the impact on wage differentials when pay transparency was introduced into the public sector in different provinces across Canada.
- Preliminary results suggest that transparency reduces overall wages, but reduces women's less than men's—thus slightly closing the gender wage gap.

RESOURCES FOR YOU

Beyond the key insights shared during our industry partner workshops, we want to make sure you have access to all of our cutting-edge research, as well as key translations for managers. So we've created various types of online resources for you to access and use. A few are highlighted below!

Research briefs

We have published over 36 research briefs that synthesize key research papers on issues related to gender and the economy, these titles include; "[How men pass as the ideal worker](#);" "[The damaging effect of gendered views on work-life balance](#);" "[Debate: Does diversity training work](#);" "[Women more often volunteer for tasks that hinder their promotability](#);" and many more. At the end of each brief, we also provide an "Implications" section that relates this research to managers and HR personnel in your organization.

[View all of our research briefs.](#)

Articles for practitioners

These articles are published specifically with our Industry Partners in mind because they integrate rigorous research with business and organizational practice. We've covered a range of different topics—from how men can move the needle in the workplace to the motherhood penalty—in concise, applicable articles.

[View all of our articles for practitioners.](#)

Explainers

We've curated a collection of resources (e.g. research briefs, videos, articles, etc.) on some of the most contentious topics in the gender space, such as; bias and stereotypes, diversity and inclusion, entrepreneurship, masculinity, work-life balance, and quotas, in order to help you change the conversation on gender equality by equipping you with key facts and research. We will continue making these explainers in the coming year, and welcome any suggestions on what topic to cover next!

[View all of our explainers.](#)

In addition to the resources listed above, there is more on our website that can help you gain insights in order to have conversations within your organization and encourage change. [Learn more here.](#)

We also recommend that you sign up for our monthly newsletter to stay up-to-date on all of our research, insights, and activities. You can [view our past newsletters here](#) and sign up today!