

# Pay Equity Information Guide



## 1. Background to Pay Equity

### Legislative Mandate

As a federally-regulated employer, you have a legal obligation to ensure male and female employees of your establishment are being paid equally for work of equal value. The pay equity legislative provisions relating to federally-regulated private sector and commercial Crown corporations are contained in section 11 of the [Canadian Human Rights Act \(CHRA\)](#), the [Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986](#), (Guidelines) and sections 182 and 249 of the [Canada Labour Code](#), Part III. Pay Equity provisions for the federal public sector are provided under the [Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act](#), which is under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Board.

Pay equity is a fundamental human right. Section 11 of the CHRA states: *"it is a discriminatory practice for an employer to establish or maintain differences in wages between male and female employees employed in the same establishment who are performing work of equal value."*

The Guidelines, issued by the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC), provide guidance on the pay equity provisions of section 11 of the CHRA and explain how they should apply to the federally-regulated private sector employers and commercial Crown Corporations. The Guidelines elaborate on the four factors used to assess the value of work (skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions); explain the concept of establishment; establish a scale to determine gender predominance; and outline reasonable factors that may justify different wages for work of equal value.

Sections 182 and 249 of the *Canada Labour Code*, Part III, empower Labour Program inspectors to inspect all records of federally-regulated employers to determine whether there is discrimination in pay based on gender. If an inspector has reasonable grounds to believe that you are not taking steps to implement pay equity in your establishment, he or she is authorized to notify the CHRC of this fact.

### Application of the Legislation

Sections 182 and 249 of the *Canada Labour Code* apply to federally-regulated private sector employers and Crown corporations, regardless of size. These include industrial sectors such as inter provincial and international railways, road and water transport; chartered banks; radio and television; telecommunications; civil aviation and airports; the grain industry; most Crown corporations; and certain activities

undertaken by First Nations.

For full texts of the legislation and Guidelines, please refer to the [Justice Canada Laws Web Site](#)

## **Pay Equity Program Overview**

The Pay Equity Program falls within the responsibilities of the Labour Program, which is part of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. The objective of the Pay Equity Program is to eliminate gender-based wage discrimination in the federally-regulated sector.

The Labour Program has developed the following three steps to help you meet your pay equity obligations, monitor your compliance and provide mediation services to the parties who request them. Since most employees in these sectors are non-unionized, this information guide applies mainly to their situation.

1. Education and promotion
2. Compliance monitoring, and
3. Mediation

## **Other Pay Equity Program Activities**

The Labour Program undertakes other activities to help you understand and comply with the provisions of the CHRA and the *Canada Labour Code*. These activities include:

- Disseminating, through Web sites and publications, information on pay equity, including tools to help you implement pay equity.
- Providing, on request, educational seminars and support for employers, employer associations, unions and employees.

## **2. Basic Concepts in Pay Equity**

Six key concepts are used in assessing pay equity compliance. They are described in the following paragraphs:

### **1. Wages**

For pay equity comparison purposes, wages consist of all forms of remuneration. Wages are defined under subsection 11(7) of the CHRA to include:

1. salaries, commissions, vacation pay, dismissal wages and bonuses;
2. reasonable value for board, rent, housing and lodging;
3. payments in kind;
4. employer contributions to pension funds or plans, long-term disability plans and all forms of health insurance plans; and
5. any other advantage received directly or indirectly from the individual employer.

Under the CHRA, wages may not be reduced to correct gender-based pay inequities.

### **2. Job Evaluation**

The CHRA requires that four factors be taken into account when assessing the value of work: skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions. For pay equity purposes, a job evaluation tool must be reliable, gender-neutral and capable of assessing the value of all jobs in an establishment. Reference to the external wage market or to negotiated wage rates should not be made when determining the value of a job to the

employer.

### **3. Reasonable Factors**

Differences in wages between men and women performing work of equal value within the same establishment are permitted if they are due to one of the “reasonable factors” set out in the Guidelines: differences in performance ratings; seniority; red-circling for re-evaluation, reclassification, downgrading of a position or demotion; rehabilitation or temporary training assignments; internal labour shortages; and regional rates of pay.

### **4. Establishment**

Federal pay equity legislation requires that women and men within the same establishment be paid the same for work of equal value. The Guidelines state that: “employees of an establishment include, notwithstanding any collective agreement applicable to any employees of the establishment, all employees of the employer subject to a common personnel and wage policy, whether or not such policy is administered centrally.”

The scope of an establishment may be greater than a single bargaining unit and an establishment may cover several geographical locations and include both unionized and non-unionized employees. Employers are not permitted to maintain separate establishments for the purpose of establishing or maintaining differences in wages between male and female employees.

### **5. Occupational Group**

An occupational group is a group of jobs used for the purpose of comparing the value of those jobs. Although the Guidelines refer to “occupational group,” they do not provide a definition of this term.

Occupational groups must be identified in a manner that will enable meaningful comparisons. The selection of jobs that will be grouped together is therefore a key decision in achieving pay equity.

### **6. Gender Predominance**

The Guidelines set out the criteria for determining the gender predominance of an occupational group. The definition of gender predominance is: 70% if the occupational group has fewer than 100 employees; 60% if the group has more than 100 but fewer than 500; and 55% if the group has 500 or more. Occupational groups are gender-neutral if the percentages represented by the predominant gender are lower than those defined in the Guidelines. A gender-neutral occupational group cannot be used to make a pay equity comparison.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Even in unionized environments, section 11 of the CHRA makes federally-regulated private sector employers and commercial Crown Corporations solely responsible for ensuring that no gender-based wage discrimination exists in their establishments. To comply with this obligation you, as an employer, should regularly review your establishment’s compensation systems, benefits programs and policies to determine whether gender-based discriminatory pay practices exist. If you find a discriminatory practice, take corrective action to eliminate it and to ensure that it does not recur.

Although the CHRA is silent on the role of unions in achieving pay equity, unions play a key role in determining wages as a result of the obligations and rights they have pursuant to the legislation regulating collective bargaining. In unionized workplaces, the union and the employer are jointly responsible for the outcomes of collective bargaining, including establishing wage rates. Achieving pay equity in a unionized environment therefore requires a collaborative approach.

The CHRA also does not require employee consultation within non-unionized workplaces. However, as in unionized workplaces, it is recommended that you consult with employees in all phases of implementing a compensation program.

The Labour Program recommends that employers involve employees and unions in identifying and resolving any gender-based wage inequity within their establishment.

#### **4. Implementing Pay Equity**

Achieving pay equity is a complex process in both unionized and non-unionized environments. The Labour Program suggests a project management approach in both cases.

For unionized establishments, the process can take place in the context of collective bargaining. The Labour Program strongly recommends that unions and employers jointly conduct a pay equity review during the term of their collective agreement. This allows the parties to enter into bargaining to renew the collective agreement with full information about the size of the pay equity gap, if any, that must be dealt with.

Some parties have found it useful to agree, in advance, about how any pay equity gap that is identified during a pay equity review will be dealt with. This approach has the benefit of alleviating the number of issues and their severity that must be dealt within bargaining.

For non-unionized establishments, implementing pay equity involves four key steps to identify and eliminate gender-based wage discrimination within the establishment. These steps are outlined in **Figure 1**.

The steps are not exhaustive since compensation systems may vary from one establishment to another. Nevertheless, they take into account the concepts set out in the CHRA, and they provide a framework for understanding “equal pay for work of equal value.”

#### **Figure 1: The Pay Equity Process**



The diagram shows the four steps to Pay equity. These steps are Project Initiation, Job Analysis, Documentation and Evaluation, Implementation and Maintenance. Communication is at the core of all these steps.

##### **Step 1: Project Initiation**

Project initiation may involve consulting with employees to establish ground rules for methodology and for paying pay equity adjustments. It may also involve establishing a representative job evaluation committee and deciding whether to use an external pay equity consultant.

The Labour Program recommends that management work with union and employee representatives on this process.

Good communication is crucial to a pay equity program’s success and you should

determine in advance how the process will be communicated to employees. The methods you choose to inform your employees of the process and the results you communicate to them will depend, to a large degree, on the size and the culture of your organization. However, most organizations agree on the following points:

- The commitment of employer and employee representatives to implementing a modern, equitable pay system should be communicated in advance of any activity.
- Employees should understand from the outset that pay equity is not going to lead to reductions in salaries for employees and that it may lead to pay equity adjustments for some employees.
- Employees should be made aware that pay equity is not intended to solve all of the wage disparities between men and women, only those parts that are due to gender discrimination. Consider establishing a mechanism for dealing with questions on the process and for resolving any concerns resulting from the evaluation of jobs or changes in compensation. Internal processes for complaint resolution allow employers and other affected parties to resolve problems. This may help to avoid complaints with the CHRC.

## **Step 2: Job Analysis, Documentation and Evaluation**

### **Determine the establishment**

Section 11 of the CHRA requires that jobs be compared within the same establishment. Section 10 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986* will help you define your establishment. For a further explanation of the concept of “establishment,” please see Section 2 of this guide.

For most employers, “establishment” will mean all of your employees. If you are uncertain of the nature, scope and possible divisibility of your establishments, please contact your closest Labour Program office.

The nature of the employment relationship can be difficult to define. Many tests are available to help you determine whether the people working in your establishment are employees or contractors. In case of doubt, contact your closest Labour Program office.

### **Analyze the employee population**

Having determined the establishment, the next step is deciding how to analyze the employee population, so that all pay inequities based on gender can be identified and eliminated.

Identifying occupational groups and determining their gender predominance are essential steps before deciding which jobs to evaluate.

Sections 12 to 15 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986* refer to an “occupational group” but do not provide a definition. This leaves some flexibility in determining which jobs should be grouped together to form an occupational group for the purpose of comparing male and female predominant groups when implementing pay equity.

Occupational groups may be defined narrowly or broadly, as appropriate for the size and nature of the establishment concerned. The following criteria will help you identify suitable groups:

- jobs characterized by work of a similar nature, including skills and responsibilities (i.e., financial analyst, financial accountant);
- jobs that have the same basic qualifications;
- similar career patterns and interchangeability of personnel; and
- jobs already grouped together for compensation purposes; for example, management

and administrative jobs.

Once the occupational groups have been identified, the gender predominance of each group can be determined. Gender predominance is determined by the number of employees of each gender in that job or group.

Section 13 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986* sets out the criteria for determining the gender predominance of a group in the event of a complaint. The same criteria should be considered when conducting a pay equity study. The definition of gender predominance is: 70% if the occupational group has fewer than 100 employees; 60% if the group has more than 100 but fewer than 500; and 55% if the group has 500 or more.

If an occupational group does not meet the criteria for gender predominance under section 12 of the Guidelines, the group is considered neutral and is not used when comparing occupational groups for pay equity purposes.

Smaller employers may wish to take a systematic approach to pay equity by ensuring that all jobs of equal value in the workplace receive equal compensation. However, by law, the employer is only required to compare female jobs with male jobs of similar value within identified occupational groups, and female-dominant occupational groups with male-dominant occupational groups.

### **Choose a job evaluation plan**

To be appropriate for pay equity purposes, a job evaluation plan must be reliable, gender-neutral and assess the four mandatory criteria of skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions as provided in sections 3 to 8 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986*. It should also:

- reflect the range of work found in a particular establishment and capture that organization's values; and
- be capable of measuring all jobs in the establishment, (i.e., from top to bottom).

While many job evaluation plans exist, the most widely used for pay equity purposes are point-factor plans. These plans allow employers to place a numerical value on the work that is being performed. Points are assigned to jobs, factor by factor (i.e. skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions) and are totalled to establish the total value for the job. Jobs are then compared based on the overall point value.

You may use multiple job evaluation plans in your establishments. However, only one of these job evaluation plans can be used for pay equity purposes. If multiple plans are used on a regular basis, periodic studies should be carried out to ensure that pay equity is being maintained.

### **Document and analyze the jobs**

Job analysis and documentation involve collecting accurate information about each job. This may be done in several ways, such as through job descriptions, interviews or questionnaires. The product is then used for job evaluation purposes.

The job description or questionnaire must take into account all the requirements necessary to perform the work in a fully satisfactory manner. It should not consider the attributes of the person occupying the job. For example, in capturing the job information for a junior technician position, only those skills required to perform the work of a technician should be considered, even if the incumbent has skills that exceed the requirements of the job.

Job descriptions or questionnaires should be current, accurate and consistent. You may use existing job descriptions, or you can modify them to meet these goals. To help ensure consistency, pre-designed job questionnaires, structured interviews and other data sources are useful. These tools help reduce possible analyst bias. Always verify the accuracy of the descriptions with the supervisor and the employee performing the work.

Accurate, gender-neutral job descriptions or questionnaires are critical. Certain aspects of jobs historically occupied by women are frequently overlooked, for example, responsibility for protecting confidentiality, prolonged standing, or stress from multiple demands.

Tips for controlling bias during the processes of writing job descriptions and evaluating jobs can be found in Section 6 of this guide.

### **Evaluate the jobs**

Job evaluation is a systematic process used to determine the value of jobs based on job information. Job evaluation is concerned with jobs, not with people in the jobs. To take the example from the preceding section, raters must not take into consideration that the incumbent has a Ph.D in Science when determining the value of the junior technician's job, which only requires a B.Sc.

To control bias in job evaluation, consider using the services of a job evaluation committee. Committees should include men and women, as well as union and non-union representatives. Give committee members accurate and detailed job information, as well as access to resources in case they require more clarity or information about job content and the evaluation method. This will help to increase the accuracy and consistency of the ratings and control bias toward or against certain types of work.

Once the initial job evaluation process is completed, all job evaluations should be reviewed to resolve anomalies and ensure the factors were applied uniformly.

Many employers consider it to be normal compensation practice to group evaluated jobs into grades to make the pay structure easier to administer. The jobs within each grade are considered equal in value for pay purposes. Grades must not be determined in such a manner as to force female-dominated jobs into lower grades.

### **Determine if wage gaps exist**

Once a job evaluation exercise has been completed, wages must be examined to see whether pay inequities exist.

Section 15 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986* provides for two types of wage comparisons: direct and indirect. A direct comparison involves comparing a predominantly female job with an equivalent predominantly male job. Where the value of the work performed and the wages received by employees in a female occupational group cannot be compared directly with a male occupational group or groups, an indirect comparison can be made. This requires the use of pay lines.

One method of determining if any wage gaps exist within an establishment involves using pay lines.

### **Determine the wage rate**

The first step in using pay lines is to determine the existing wage rate for each position. The CHRA includes as wages any form of remuneration payable for work performed by an individual. It may not be necessary to calculate the monetary value

of direct and indirect benefits if they are equally accessible to all employees.

For this purpose, use the wage rate that the employee can expect to achieve given fully satisfactory performance in the job.

### **Plot and compare the pay lines**

The next step is to express the wage rate in relation to evaluation values; that is, to plot the pay lines. This involves plotting the total evaluation points and the respective wage rate for each job. One pay line should be plotted for the jobs in the male-predominant group and another for the jobs in the female-predominant group.

Two lines of “best fit”; one for the male-predominant groups and one for the female-predominant groups, can then be drawn. A line of “best fit” is a line drawn through the group of data points that best estimates the relationship between the variables—in this case, wages and job value.

In **Figure 2**, two lines have been drawn: one represents the line of “best fit” for the jobs in the male-predominant group and the other represents the line of best fit for the jobs in the female-predominant group.

**Figure 2**



The space between the lines in Figure 2 represents the differences in wages between male and female jobs in the establishment, which is referred to as a “wage gap.”

Where dozens or even hundreds of jobs have been evaluated, pay inequities may not be immediately obvious, and a method of isolating potential problems and determining the size of those problems should be used. Larger employers may prefer to use statistical techniques, such as multiple regression analysis, which results in making indirect comparisons of jobs.

### **Determining whether any part of the wage gap is due to systemic gender discrimination**

Having determined the extent of the wage gap, if any, the next step is to determine the extent of the pay equity gap. The data should be further examined to determine whether any differentials can be explained in terms of one of the reasonable factors outlined in section 16 of the Guidelines. Examples of reasonable factors include: differences in performance ratings; seniority; red-circling; rehabilitation or temporary training assignments; internal labour shortages; and regional pay rates.

The pay equity gap is a subset of the wage gap that can be attributed to systemic gender discrimination in compensation practices. It is the portion of the wage gap that cannot be explained by other reasonable factors.

### **Review pay administration practices**

The next step is to determine whether past administration practices are influencing pay differentials between males and females. Some of the areas to be reviewed are: time required to reach the wage rate given a fully satisfactory performance; different performance rating criteria for different occupational groups; different entry levels or wages for males and females; and different salary range structures for jobs of equal value.

Consistent and equitable pay administration is fundamental to maintaining pay equity.



Inequitable pay administration practices, if not remedied, will lead to future pay inequities. Policies and practices may need to be amended to ensure equal pay for work of equal value in the future.

### **Step 3: Implementation**

If pay inequities have been identified, it will be necessary to:

- calculate the total amount required to eliminate the inequities; and
- establish a schedule and methodology for implementing pay equity.

The federal legislation does not impose rigid implementation schedules upon federally-regulated employers, nor does it place a limit on the amount of correction an employer must undertake to achieve pay equity.

While it is expected that women will be the chief beneficiaries of pay equity implementation, the law applies equally to men. In addition, men employed in female-predominant occupational groups may benefit from any wage adjustment.

### **Implementation benefits**

You may benefit from being able to demonstrate that pay equity exists within your establishment and that a program is in place to correct and eliminate potential problems. Some of the benefits include:

- the ability to better respond to pay equity complaints;
- increased wage cost certainty if you voluntarily identify and correct inequities;
- the possibility to phase in the necessary wage adjustments, within a reasonable time frame, in cooperation with employees;
- the ability to determine wages in an equitable method that is not based on historical pay practices or bargaining patterns; and
- the participation of employees in the pay equity process will help to obtain acceptance and commitment from all parties. Working jointly to resolve pay equity issues using a collaborative project management approach will:
  - break down myths
  - promote transparency
  - prevent mistaken assumptions
  - promote understanding
  - reduce resistance
  - improve morale

This flexibility may not be available in the event of a gender-based wage discrimination complaint. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has ordered that pay adjustments be made retroactive to a point in time that in some cases predates the complaint by a year or more. This means that you may have to pay to correct past pay inequities.

Employers who have implemented a pay equity program within their establishment have noted other benefits of particular importance to them.

### **Step 4: Maintenance and Review**

Once pay equity has been implemented, you should establish a system of periodic pay equity reviews to ensure that no new gender-based wage gaps emerge.

There are a number of factors that could result in emerging pay equity wage gaps after pay equity has been implemented. These include organizational change, the

elimination or creation of new occupational groups, change in gender predominance of an occupational group, introduction of new benefit plans and the introduction of new compensation systems.

The Labour Program recommends that employers establish a compensation system to ensure that gender-based wage gaps do not recur.

## **5. Frequently Asked Questions**

Section 11 of the CHRA includes a number of questions from employers who are trying to grasp and apply the concept of equal pay for work of equal value: What is equal pay for work of equal value? How is the value of jobs within an establishment determined? Some of these fundamental questions are answered here.

### **Are the pay equity and employment equity programs different?**

Yes. While both promote and support the goal of equity in the workplace, equal pay for work of equal value, or pay equity as it is often called, refers to the payment of equal wages to males and females performing work that is determined to be of equal value. The objective of pay equity legislation is to close that part of the wage gap that is due to pay inequities based on gender.

Employment equity programs arise from the Employment Equity Act and are also administered by the Labour Program. Their objective is to ensure that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability. Employment equity is intended to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, Aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities and visible minorities.

### **Is pay equity the same thing as equal pay for equal work?**

No. The concept of equal pay for equal work means that people who perform the same job, or similar work, must be paid the same wage, regardless of their gender. For example, a female janitor and a male janitor in the same establishment should receive the same wages for performing the same work.

Pay equity refers to the concept of equal pay for work of equal value. It adds a new dimension to the concept of equal pay for equal work by requiring that jobs within an establishment be compared on the basis of their value to the employer.

In other words, pay equity does not limit comparisons to similar work but requires the comparison of very different jobs, such as a female clerical job with a male janitor, or female lab technician job with a male carpenter.

### **How is value measured?**

Subsection 11(2) of the CHRA requires that four factors be taken into account when measuring the value of work. These factors are skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions. They are described in sections 3 to 8 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986*. Reference to the external wage market should not be made in determining the value of jobs to the employer.

The Labour Program recommends that employers use a job evaluation tool to determine the value of each job. To more readily meet the requirements of the law and the Guidelines, employers should adopt a gender-neutral evaluation system that can measure the four factors to determine the relative value of jobs within the establishment.

## **Are there factors that justify a difference in wages?**

Yes. Differences in wages between men and women performing work of equal value within the same establishment are permitted if they are due to one of the “reasonable factors” set out in section 16 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986*. These factors include:

- differences in performance ratings;
- seniority;
- red-circling for re-evaluation, reclassification, downgrading of a position or demotion;
- rehabilitation or temporary training assignments;
- internal labour shortages; or
- regional rates of pay.

The onus is on the employer to demonstrate that a factor is applied consistently and equitably.

## **Is the size of an employer a factor?**

No. Pay equity legislation in the federal jurisdiction applies to all employers, regardless of size.

## **Can wages be reduced to correct a pay inequity?**

No. The CHRA prohibits the reduction of wages to correct gender-based wage inequities.

## **Is there a difference between a “wage gap” and a “pay equity gap”?**

Yes. The term “wage gap” refers to the difference between the wages paid to male and female predominant jobs, and can be due to a number of factors, some of which are permissible. The “pay equity gap” is the part of a wage gap that is attributable to gender-based wage discrimination. Pay equity legislation is aimed at eliminating the “pay equity gap.”

## **What about commission sales?**

There are two main systems of commission sales: total commission and base plus commission.

Total commission refers to an employee’s income being based solely on an agreed-upon percentage or portion of the sales revenue generated. While some employers use systems to even out revenue during the year, such as various draw-down schemes, the compensation attached to these positions will fluctuate and may be difficult to plot on a line.

The second system, base plus commission, refers to an employee’s income that consists of a guaranteed base plus either a percentage of sales or a percentage of sales over a certain level. In these cases, the employer has a salary level that is envisioned for a fully satisfactory salesperson. This salary becomes the reference point for comparison.

Commission must be available on an equal basis to all employees to whom these systems apply within an establishment. Policies regarding commission sales should be reviewed to ensure that they will not introduce gender bias.

## **Who handles pay equity complaints?**

The Labour Program does not have the authority to accept a pay equity complaint. If employees working for federally-regulated employers believe they have legitimate pay equity complaints, they should contact the CHRC for advice on how to proceed.

**Who does the *Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act* apply to and how does it affect us?**

The *Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act* applies to the federal public sector and is the responsibility of the Treasury Board. This Act holds the employer and the bargaining agents responsible for ensuring pay equity within their establishments. The complaints in these cases are made to the Public Service Labour Relations Board. This Act does not affect the pay equity provisions applying to the federal private sector employers and the Crown corporations.

*Canadian Human Rights Commission*

*344 Slater Street, 8th Floor*

*Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1E1*

*1-888-214-1090*

[Canadian Human Rights Commission \(chrc-ccdp.ca\)](http://chrc-ccdp.ca)

## **6. Tips for Controlling Gender Bias**

### **Controlling Bias in Writing Job Descriptions**

The objective of writing job descriptions is to obtain the most factual, consistent and accurate information about jobs to evaluate them. This section of the Guide may help you to identify and eliminate elements of your compensation policy and practices that may give rise to gender bias. Special attention should be directed to controlling bias in the job analysis phase that precedes job description writing.

#### **Create consistent and accurate job descriptions**

To ensure consistency, a questionnaire can be used to gather job facts. Questionnaires ask the same questions about different kinds of work in the same way. A well-designed questionnaire will produce complete, accurate and reliable data. It will control, to some extent, the tendency of some people to over-describe or under-describe the work they do.

#### **Ensure descriptions reflect all the work to be done**

In describing jobs, some aspects of work traditionally performed by women are often overlooked, such as responsibility for operating office equipment, caring for people who are sick and working with frequent interruptions or distractions. Examples of frequently overlooked tasks follow these tips.

In addition, the person writing a job description may have preconceived notions about the value of a job before it is even described and therefore may overlook important job content.

#### **Update job descriptions**

Many factors, such as technology or reorganization of the work, can make job descriptions obsolete. Therefore, they should be updated regularly. Questionnaires should be standardized and used for all jobs.

#### **Use accurate, non-gender-related job titles**

Avoid titles that are gender-related (e.g., use cleaner instead of cleaning lady) or

misleading (e.g., use waste collector instead of sanitation engineer).

### **Incumbent and supervisor should review job descriptions**

This will ensure more consistency and accuracy in the descriptions of duties and responsibilities.

### **Use gender-neutral language**

Job descriptions should never refer to the incumbent's gender (e.g., "he does..." or "she does...") since this language tends to perpetuate stereotypes about work traditionally performed by women and work traditionally performed by men. Instead, write, "This job requires..."

### **Examples of Frequently Overlooked Content in Jobs Traditionally Performed by Women Skills**

- Scheduling appointments
- Writing correspondence and standard letters, taking minutes, proofreading and editing
- Operating and maintaining office machines
- Hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills such as rapid finger dexterity (e.g., typing, giving injections)
- Establishing and maintaining filing and scheduling systems and data retrieval
- Training and orienting new staff

### **Effort**

- Balancing multiple demands
- Calming upset, ill or dissatisfied people and gathering information from them
- Eyestrain from reading handwritten material or from time spent at the computer
- Providing care and emotional support
- Frequent bending or lifting
- Prolonged concentration

### **Responsibility**

- Responsibility for damage to equipment
- Acting on behalf of absent supervisors
- Representing the employer through communications with the public
- Developing and coordinating work schedules and planning meetings

### **Working Conditions**

- Communication stress
- Frequent distractions or interruptions
- Exposure to disease, dirt, dust, human waste
- Working in an open-office setting without privacy or with constant noise, crowding
- Sitting or standing in the same position all day with little opportunity for movement

### **Controlling Bias in the Job Evaluation Process**

Bias in the job evaluation process may be controlled in the following ways:

#### **Establish a representative committee to evaluate the jobs**

A representative job evaluation committee should consist of people from different organizational levels and should be gender-balanced. The purpose of this committee is

to work collaboratively to determine the value of jobs within the establishment and the size of any pay inequity that may exist.

A committee with well-chosen and well-trained members can improve the process and ensure a range of insights about jobs. It will also help to avoid any stereotyping of work performed mostly by women.

### **Ensure committee members have adequate training**

Committee members must have a very good knowledge of the principles of job evaluation and how to apply the chosen job evaluation plan. They should also be provided with accurate and detailed job information. This will ensure more consistent ratings of the jobs within the establishment.

### **Ensure that experts are available to explain jobs to the committee**

It is not possible for each committee member to understand all aspects of all jobs being performed within the establishment, nor is it possible to describe every aspect of each job in the job description/questionnaire. If information is unclear or the job is particularly difficult to understand, it may be necessary to request that an expert, such as the person in the job or the supervisor, explain the job to the evaluation committee.

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