Inclusive Workplace Design

Roundtable Discussion, Toronto, March 4, 2020 10AM-12PM

Why is IWD important in the workplace?

- Diversity and Intersectional thinking
    - Allows for different solutions from various point of views
    - Has shown to impact and be conducive to increased performance and safety in the workplace
- Attract and retain talent
    - In order to address challenges in engaging workforces we must include women and underrepresented groups
    - May need to compete with other industries
    - Ensuring an inclusive workplace will ensure large talent pool in times of labour shortage
      Stats: In Australia 50 mining engineers graduate every year. BHP alone employs 95 mining engineers per year.
- Create safe spaces
    - Behaviour and social norms can be changed with better representation of underrepresented groups; allows everyone to be themselves if they don't have to adapt to only one acceptable social norm
    - To change microcultures

IWD Issues observed in the workplace

- Frontline
    - While issues are designed to be offloaded on HR, HR is not easily accessible to those on the frontline. i.e. frontline worker schedules may not coincide with HR hours resulting in response time lags, sometimes the worker may not even have a company email address or it is not in their work culture to check emails. = reactive decision making rather than pro-active
- Remoteness
    - getting employees in and out of remote mine sites can be challenging
    - FIFO is not conducive to the typical family lifestyle thus attracting and retaining female staff can pose challenges (some love it though so careful not to make assumptions and generalisations)
- Digitalisation/automation
- Design
    - Check workplace design assumptions and challenge them. Bring in human factors that often overlooked (i.e. who can reach what, wear what etc.). Other example refuge stations in underground mines should also contain sanitary towels or menstruation kit for female employees: who will use x space or equipment, are we including everyone?
    - ISO standards are based on standard male sizes
    - Only successful in collaboration, when design solution is enabled by leaders and supported by an operational budget
    - A lot of retrofitting occurs not just in terms of equipment but also around training
- Do companies reach out to the entire supply chain? Where is the tender advertised? Women in more remote regions can not access tenders that are in town

Are there policies in place for IWD?

- Certain companies have policies for ergonomic design, however special equipment will cost more and so every employee needs to make the case and/or is dependent on local leadership's buy in at every location to be enforced
- Policy can be a false security if not enforced
- Often inconsistent – different options at different regions
    o Arguments for streamlined policies
    o Arguments for localized policies to ensure different cultures are seen
    o is the policy available to all?
- Conversations on policies that are available to staff need to be reinforced
- TOP DOWN
    o Policies allow for companies to show accountability and create a benchmark for expected behavior
    o The key is to lead by example to ensure that a culture of inclusivity is created to allow all staff to feel safe in speaking up without fear of retribution (SPEAKUP CULTURE)
    o Women and men often don't report bad behavior, harassment or abuse as they don't know how to speak up: what the policies, procedures and reporting guidelines are and even if there are any
    o Without Speak-up culture, workers fear for job security
- Unconscious bias training, opportunity for leadership development
    o Organic change may not be the answer as we only saw 1% increase in WIM over the past year
- However, policy important too, without it you can't enforce something. What it needs to help drive the agenda is the procedure which includes who, how often, when etc. You can then measure outcomes against the policy

Processes and decision making in IDW – how does it work?

- Leadership at every level – Local leadership enforcement of policy
    o i.e. on a local level, bottom lines are often extremely important, thus small things such as sit-stand desk may be denied
    o courageous conversations to allow for speak-up culture is important
- Unions
    o To consider an objective structure which favours seniority rather than subjective and perception-based job and performance reviews. Not everything is quantifiable and if you work on tasks alone no one can see how well or not you work.
- Opt-out culture
    o i.e. when promotions are available, everyone is automatically opted-in for equal opportunities. The employee must opt-out if they are not interested
- Remove unconscious bias
    o Remove names from resumes
    o Consider language biases in job posting, performance reviews, and everyday conversation
        ▪ Specific words can deter or attract male/female based on ingrained biases in society
    o Change previous and current policies with embedded biases

Solutions

- Engage, Engage, Engage
    - o sessions with different affinity groups
- Workplace observation/audit the workplace by people that do the job
- Develop a diagnostic
- Toolkit on how to comfortably speak up – i.e. Me Too Mining Association
- Zero tolerance
- Quotas and timeline to meet inclusivity goals
- Empower every employee to stand up for their own needs, in a safe environment where they can speak with no retribution or ridicule
- Devolve responsibility & accountability
- Culture shift: all leaders at all levels need to get on board

- Create policies but ensure that these policies are enforced, can be done by leading by example (management) to create an open and inclusive workplace culture

- FIFO: supporting couples on site, more support for parents and families

- local communities – contract-base solutions during mine development?

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Group Discussion

Solutions we want to see for IWD

- Training – Understand different individual learning styles before creating training programmes; in addition, take into account global differences in culture of learning by location
- Feedback - When things go wrong or at the end of a day/shift/project: discuss what happened and what could be done better by brainstorming solutions and ideas
- Know your market – the workplace comprises of your staff, to ensure that it is inclusive to them, keep them involved in the discussion
    o Currently insufficient knowledge on the frontlines
- Design solution
    o Ensure the scope of the project is understood and decided upon before embarking
    o Go back to people you are making decisions for to ensure that it works for them too.
- Collaboration and Transparency
    o Share knowledge across teams and sectors
    o Can look at different industries who have more inclusive and transparent workplaces for guidance
    o for mining companies to share learning amongst themselves to accelerate change
- Invest in people – leverage accelerators
    o Invest in people who will develop, drive, and govern the guidelines and solutions
- Encourage disruption and active intervention
- Metrics
    o Set guidelines and keep checking in
    o make sure metrics are adapted to each different part of the business, say that front line are not measured on performance by same metrics than say a corporate office department.
- Plan: everyone wants to do it but how do you make it stick? The only way is a design solution. If piecemeal there is no continuity. Discuss what you will tackle and what not as you won't be able to do it all = define scope. Then focus on a) diagnostic, b) revisit policies & procedures, c) change management, d) time line and e) implementation solutions/tactics. Check if the person doing the organizational redesign qualified?
    o Issue: these projects are long-term and take several years, there isn't always continuity in senior management supporting it. Important to allow senior leaders to fail and to be supported by the board.

Frontline positions: how to retain women

Change pay structure so that all women can benefit

Positions advertised, is the training really a prerequisite or can those without be trained on the job if all other skills are a fit?

career impact agreement

Travel bias

Lack of mentors/sponsors for women I frontline roles