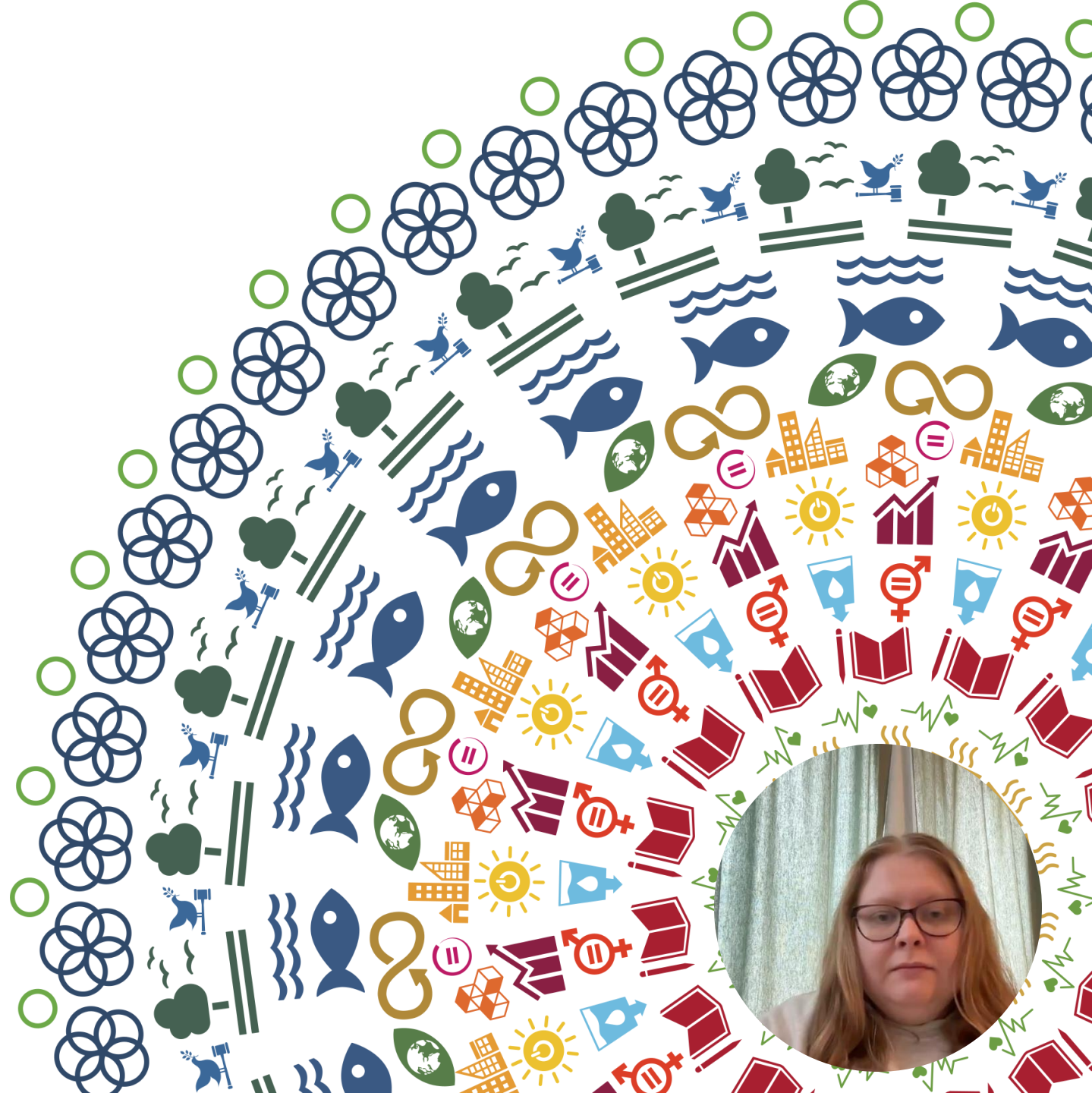




**Sustainability
Advisors**

DEI Actions

Practical actions to support DEI
and gender equality in the
workplace



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Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

What it is and why does it matter?

Creating inclusive workplaces that embrace diversity and promote equality is not just a legal or ethical requirement, it's the foundation for thriving businesses and healthier communities.

Diversity is about valuing the unique differences between people. A diverse workplace welcomes and respects all people of all ages, abilities, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

Equity in the workplace means equal job opportunities and fairness for employees and job applicants. It's about recognising and removing barriers so individuals can reach their full potential, regardless of their background or circumstances. Equity differs from equality. Equality is treating everyone the same. Equity recognises that people may have different needs (e.g. reasonable adjustments during interviews).

Inclusion in the workplace means everyone feels valued at work and empowered to thrive without barriers to participation.



Gender Equality

What it is and why does it matter?

Gender equality in the workplace ensures everyone has access to the same job opportunities and fair treatment, without discrimination and regardless of gender. This often overlaps with other aspects of equality including (but not limited to) race, disability, and class.

What does gender inequality look like?

It can take many forms, including:

- ✓ Different pay for different genders
- ✓ Fewer promotional /leadership opportunities for one gender compared with another
- ✓ Discrimination and harassment
- ✓ A lack of support that affects one gender more than another



Gender Equality

What it is and why does it matter?

Research shows a clear link between gender equity and equality and organisational success^[1]. Inequity in the workplace can damage the success of any business.

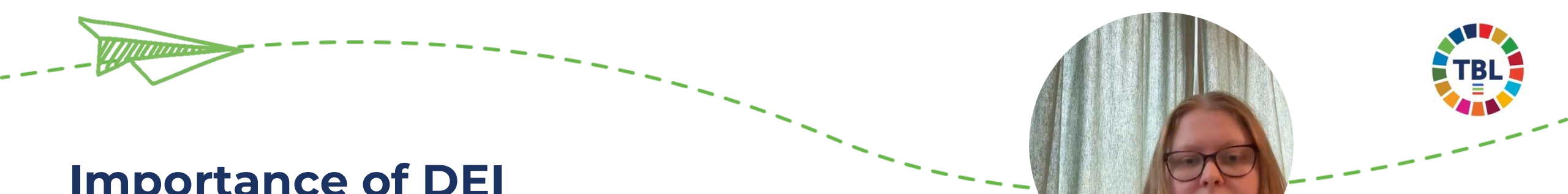
Gender equality encourages productivity, innovation and improved financial performance.

Overcoming gender inequality in the workforce can take many shapes, including:

- Flexible/hybrid working norms
- Introducing equitable parental leave
- Establishing anti-harassment or reporting channels
- Setting up a women in leadership support group

What's right and equitable for your business might not be right for another. It depends on the business, your people, the context, and resource availability.





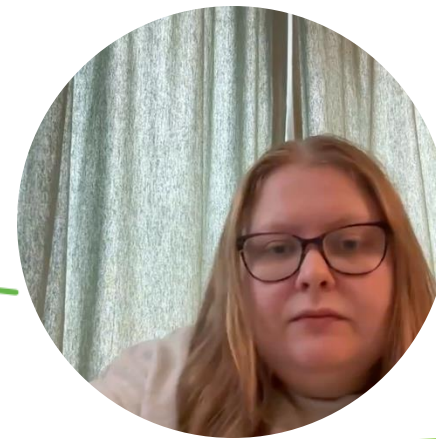
Importance of DEI

A fundamental human right that we have not achieved

Studies show that DEI improves employee engagement, innovation and productivity. It creates a happier workforce and a more respectful, supportive environment. It builds trust between employees and managers.

Globally, legislation and policies exist to support gender equality. For example, in the UK the 2010 Equality Act and Gender Pay Gap Reporting Regulations exist to reduce workplace gender inequity. However, compliance through policy and legislation is not enough on its own to achieve DEI and gender equity.

Businesses need to take a proactive approach to close the equity gap. And management and leadership teams must be accountable for ensuring DEI is embedded across the business.



140
years

The time the UN has estimated it will take for women to be represented equally in positions of power and leadership in the workplace²

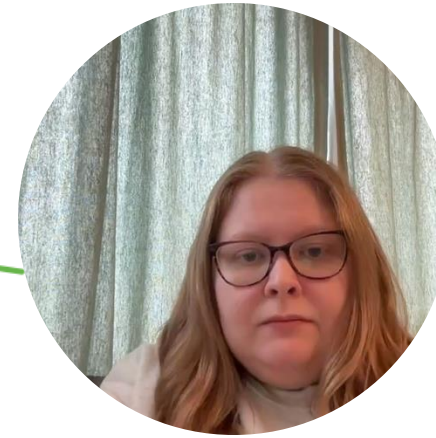
Business case for equity and diversity

What's in it for you?

Promoting gender equity and diversity is integral for a successful business. It makes your employees feel valued and appreciated, so they're better able to do their jobs. It improves productivity, reduces high turnover rates and improves financial performance.

It allows for a diverse range of perspectives and ways of thinking, which makes your business better at innovating and solving problems.

From a reputational standpoint, it shows investors, stakeholders, and customers that you value all employees equally and fairly.



47%

Companies with the greatest proportion of women on executive committees earned a 47% higher rate of return on equity than companies with no woman executives³

**What will your
next action be?**



Develop inclusive policies

Enable equal opportunities for participation and progression

DEI policies are powerful tools for creating a workplace where colleagues feel supported and empowered.

If your workplace already has inclusive policies in place, it may be worth **increasing their visibility and accessibility** to make sure everyone knows about them and can engage with them.

If it doesn't, this is your chance to lead the change. Use your voice to advocate for policies and initiatives that promote equal opportunity and enhance diversity.

Policies should have specific owners and be reviewed regularly.

You can use them for reporting against metrics and other KPIs too.



Develop inclusive policies

Start small. Launch a **policy working group** with colleagues and relevant departments to identify which policies and progression opportunities matter most to your team. Focus efforts on developing one area at a time to drive meaningful impact and lessen resistance.

Work alongside relevant managers and departments to ensure policies fit your structured progression practices and are embedded within workplace culture.

Policies may include:

- ✓ Flexible working and parental leave – to support all parents equally
- ✓ Upskilling and continuing professional development
- ✓ Leadership pathways and support - for underrepresented groups



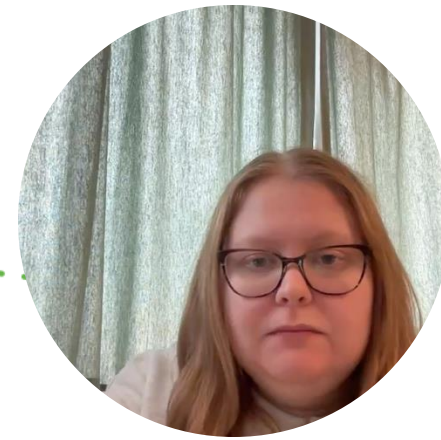
Create resource groups

Strengthen connection and collaboration in the workplace

DEI and gender equity resource groups create a safe network for employees to come together to share experiences, learn from each other and gain access to resources they may find hard to acquire.

They go beyond simply connecting with each other. DEI resource groups are about **building communities to share experiences, ideas, problems, solutions, and opportunities.**

These networks can include a dedicated women's network to give women a space to grow, build trust, and access support. You might also launch an LGBTQIA+, disability confident, Black or Asian employee network where colleagues can come together in a safe space and share experiences.



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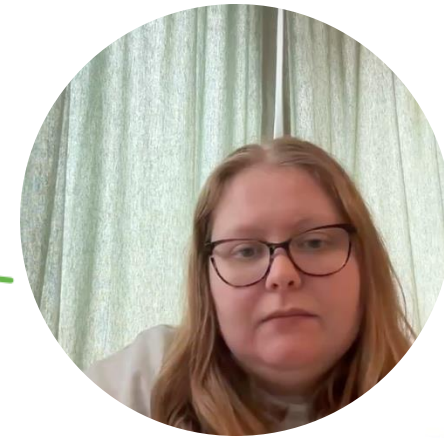
Create resource groups

It may be that your workplace already has DEI and gender equity resource groups that you could get involved in. If it doesn't, why not suggest one?

It's all about bringing together people in safe and welcoming shared interest communities where everyone can feel empowered and respected, no matter their differences.

It's important to add safeguards to resource groups. Make sure they are:

- ✓ Adequately resourced
- ✓ Are assigned an executive sponsor
- ✓ Voluntary, to ensure everyone feels welcome and not overburdened



Organise and take part in events

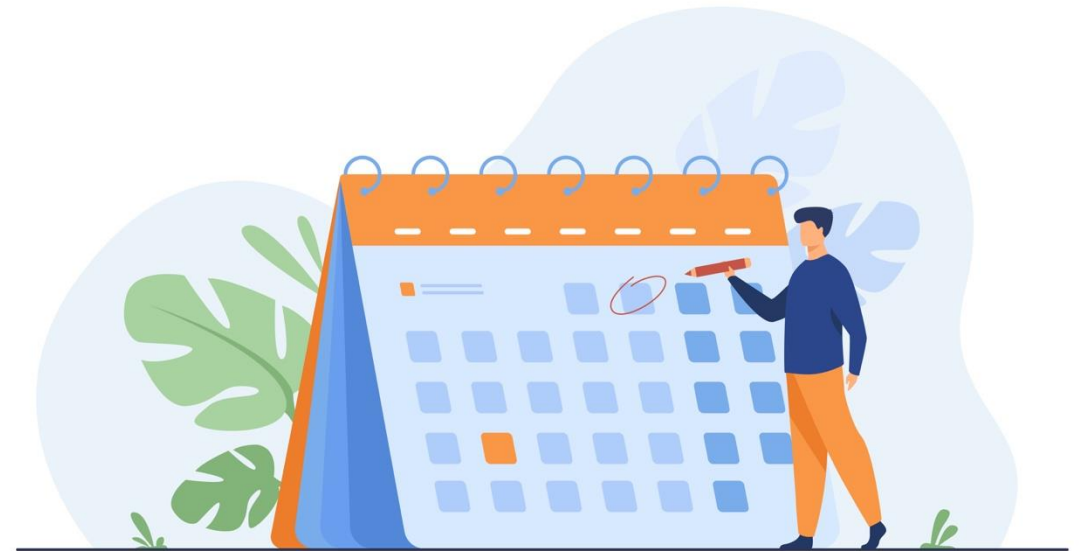
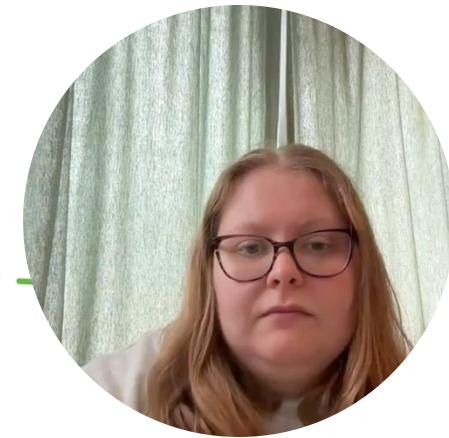
Raise awareness and enhance support

Organise event days or develop an inclusive calendar of festivals/holidays that acknowledges and celebrates different cultures and religions, and diversity. You might include key speakers or presentations from support groups to raise awareness and build understanding.

The calendar might include events such as:

- ✓ Religious festivals like Christmas, Diwali, Eid, Hannukah and Vaisakhi
- ✓ International Women's Day
- ✓ Pride month

Make sure you involve enthusiastic or knowledgeable colleagues in planning events.

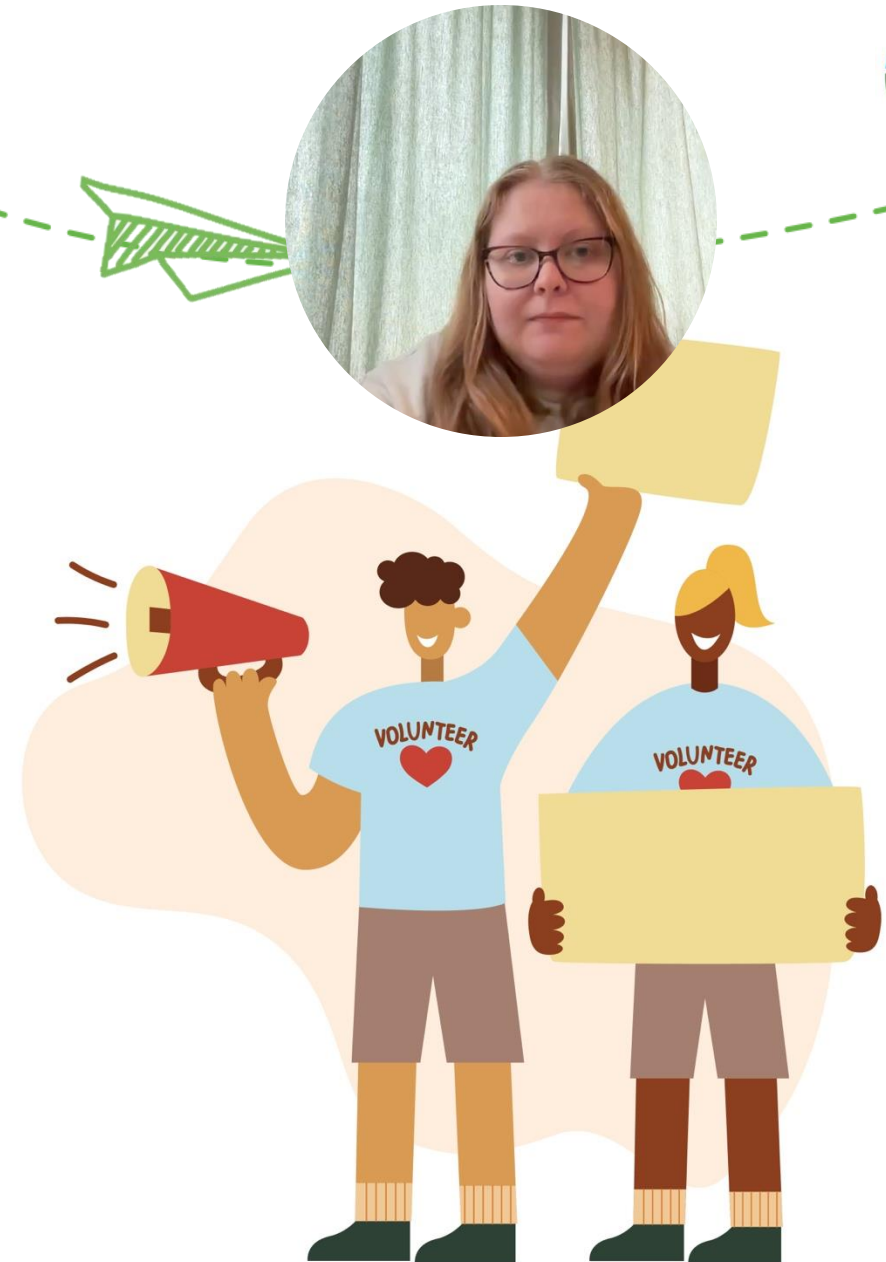


Organise and take part in events

Raise awareness and enhance support

Having these events and awareness days can enable dialogue, allow colleagues to participate in learning opportunities and share their own experiences. This can help **connect everyone in the workplace and enhance mutual understanding**.

When planning events, it's important to ensure they are accessible, and clearly defined. Gathering feedback and measuring engagement of events can also provide further insight.



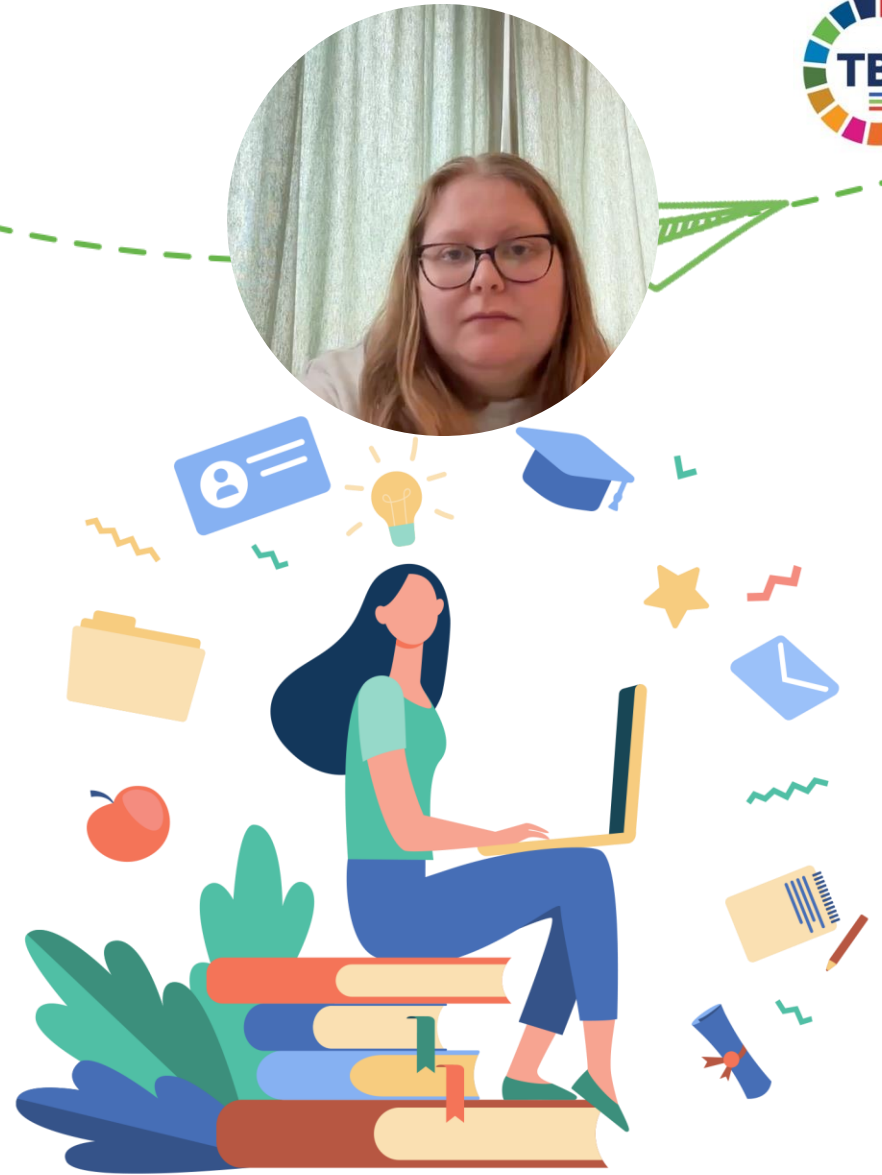
Encourage training programmes and mentoring

Educate employees about DEI and gender equality

Offering **training and mentoring opportunities** is a great way to improve understanding, raise awareness around a topic and ensure everyone has the same career development opportunities no matter their gender.

When colleagues gain insight into the causes of gender inequality and the barriers, they become better equipped to enable a **more inclusive and supportive workplace** culture.

If your workplace doesn't yet have a formal training or mentoring programme, consider working with relevant departments to create **structured training processes**.



Encourage training programmes and mentoring

Training topics could include:

- ✓ Unconscious bias during recruitment
- ✓ Anti-harassment
- ✓ Inclusivity training, or even
- ✓ Bystander intervention training

Even researching available training opportunities, creating educational materials and launching career development schemes can make a meaningful difference.

They can all help your business open up conversations around unconscious bias, cultivating a workplace that proactively promotes inclusivity.



05

Summary



Summary

Key takeaways from this course

- ✓ **Diversity** is about valuing the unique differences between people.
- ✓ **Equity** in the workplace means equal job opportunities and fairness for employees and job applicants.
- ✓ **Inclusion** in the workplace means everyone feels valued and respected at work.
- ✓ **Gender equality** in the workplace ensures all gender identities have access to the same job opportunities and fair treatment, without discrimination and regardless of gender.
- ✓ There are a variety of **practical actions** you can take to promote DEI and support gender equality within the workplace. These include creating inclusive policies, resource groups, training programmes and events.
- ✓ A great place to start is to understand what your organisation is already doing to support DEI, and where you could provide further support in starting conversations, assigning owners for specific actions, or creating policies.



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- ☐ Developing policies and governance
- ☐ Understanding, aligning or complying with standards and frameworks
- ☐ Setting a strategy
- ☐ Engaging suppliers
- ☐ Engaging customers and employees
- ☐ Educating your people



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