



# THE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION OF WOMEN:

*What do women want?*

APRIL 2004

REPORT PREPARED BY

LINDA MUNRO

FOR



FUNDED BY:



The Recruitment  
& Retention  
Of Women:

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THE WOMEN'S REFERENCE GROUP



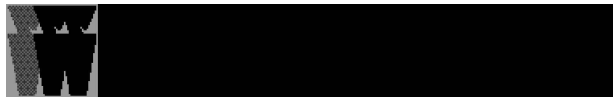
Hamilton Training Advisory Board  
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## INTRODUCTION

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Over the past several months, a study has been undertaken on the subject of *Workplace Culture, as it affects the Recruitment and Retention of Women*. Under the guidance of the Research Subcommittee of HTAB's Women's Reference Group, research and consultations have been undertaken with a three-part intent:

- Firstly, to consider the social and economic value of women in the workplace.** There are numerous and compelling reasons why it is both important and smart for employers to create positive workplace experiences for women. The first section of this report will highlight these factors and considerations.
- Secondly, to examine contemporary workplace culture,** in terms of what women value in a workplace, and the issues, challenges and dynamics that impact on women's recruitment and retention decisions. Both a summary of "what women want" at work, and a generalized workplace cultural profile will be presented in Section Two of this report. The Canadian and Ontario-based research findings that are presented here were supplemented and further explored through discussions with women who work in a variety of professions in Hamilton.
- Thirdly, to formulate ideas and constructive advice for employers and employees on how to create more "female-friendly" workplaces.** Section Three of the report includes suggestions for measures, practices and/or policies that might be adopted to more effectively address and manage women's workplace culture experiences and issues. Research and consultation findings, tools and resources, and best practices of leading Hamilton employers are presented in this section of the report.

# Section One

## PART A: THE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC VALUE OF WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

It is widely acknowledged and understood that women constitute a major and critical component of the Canadian workforce. This fact, however, has been imbued with greater dimension and a new poignancy in recent times, as a result of a range of social and economic factors and dynamics. Women in the Workplace are of greater and more strategic importance than ever before, and that importance continues to grow. Consider the following:

- 1** **There has been an enormous increase in women's participation rates in the Canadian workplace.** Statistics Canada has recently reported that over the last 30 years, Canada has gone from having the lowest proportion of working women among industrialized countries to a record high participation rate of 71%. This current percentage is the same as that of the United States, and is second only to Sweden, which has a 76% participation rate. This represents a dramatic increase over the 44% participation rate of Canadian women 30 years earlier, and the greatest change among major industrialized countries in the world.<sup>1</sup>
- 2** **Despite record-high participation rates, women continue to be under-employed and under-remunerated, relative to men.** While the number of women in the workforce has dramatically increased, most work as nurses, teachers or hold clerical and other jobs traditionally held by women. The 2001 Canadian Census shows that women filled 35% of management jobs, and the earnings of women employed full-time for the full-year were 71.6% of those of men. Locally in Hamilton, the 2001 earning differential between men and women was even greater, with women's full-time, full-year earnings being only 68.4% that of the same category of men.<sup>2</sup> Also, in 2001 women represented 11.1% of Canada's low after-tax income population, compared to 9.6% of men.<sup>3</sup>
- 3** **Family dynamics and demographic trends are putting more familial pressures on women than ever before.** The proportion of all families that are lone-parent families (mainly headed by women) is two and a half times what it was in 1941. Additionally, the proportion of the population over age 65 has doubled, and will continue to grow, with significant implications for care giving.<sup>4</sup>
- 4** **In Canada, issues of recruitment and retention have come to the business and economic forefront.** While women's workplace participation grows and inequities persist, other demographic and economic factors are rendering the effective use of human resources, including women, more important than ever before. Canada's population is aging. Along with Japan, Canada has the lowest ratio of younger individuals in the workforce (20 to 39) to those aged 40 to 59.<sup>5</sup> This trend renders retention strategies increasingly important to business. Additionally, our population growth is slowing. Canadian employers are endeavouring to manage emerging labour supply shortages, caused by a steady growth in early retirements, lower rates of labour force participation, and higher rates of part-time work by older workers.

In 2001, the Conference Board of Canada surveyed Canadian employers regarding their future needs, and discovered that Canadian executives and CEOs are troubled by an overall shortage of "bench strength" for implementing major change and for leadership roles in organizations.<sup>6</sup> Losing talented men and women puts organizations at a disadvantage: it presents competitive risks, exacerbates talent shortages, erodes employee satisfaction, and generates replacement costs. In times of shortage, attracting and keeping the best people becomes crucial.

# Section One

## PART B: THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CREATING WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR WOMEN

The factors outlined in Part A demonstrate the growing social and economic case for better use of women in the workplace. Additionally, however, there are strong business arguments in favour of creating workplaces that work for women. Research shows that improved ability to attract and retain women goes hand-in-hand with better business results. More “female friendly” workplaces not only work better for women; they also work better for employers and yield positive and improved business results. Recent Canadian-based research commissioned by the Conference Board of Canada makes a compelling business case for more female-friendly workplaces, by citing specific and improved business results. Such business results can be grouped into two broad categories: External Factors, and Internal Factors.

### 1. EXTERNAL FACTORS

Organizations compete for external resources in both the labour market and the investment and consumer markets. Better utilization of women can contribute to important competitive advantages for employers in both spheres of business.

- In the **labour market**, where there is often a competition for skills, workplaces that are welcoming of women expand the size of the talent pool they can draw upon. Such workplaces will have more applicants and will generally be able to hire more qualified people. Being recognized as an “employer of choice” – for men and for women - improves an employer’s ability to attract and retain the most capable workers from the labour pool. Improved recruitment and retention may facilitate growth opportunities for small and medium sized businesses; recent research by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business shows that such businesses are often precluded from growth because of the limitations of labour availability.<sup>8</sup>
- In the **investment and consumer markets**, there are both perception-based and substantive reasons for employers to effectively employ women. A company’s track record in people management practices, including women’s participation rates and advancement, can affect both buyer’s and investor’s decisions. Businesses that thrive and prosper are those that compete effectively for customers and market share. It makes good business sense to view women as an important market segment in business, as their buying power is substantial. In North America, women influence 80 % of purchasing decisions for all products. To ensure a successful market focus on women, employers will want women employees to be a critical component of their organizations.

## 2. INTERNAL FACTORS

Women and men working together in a meaningful, integrated fashion bring a wider and more diversified perspective than either group working alone, which can lead to better decision-making in the workplace. The nature and quality of gender relations is key here, however. The mere presence of women in the workplace will not guarantee positive outcomes, however. Diversity must be valued and effectively leveraged for better performance. This requirement dovetails very nicely with the recommended style of leadership in the workplace today; leaders are encouraged to be more adaptive and participative, and encourage the realization of workplaces that are flexible, non-hierarchical, cooperative and holistic. According to the International Labour Organization,

*“Such environments de-emphasize the old rigidities which have been restrictive to women and allow a more positive appreciation of so-called ‘feminine’ management qualities and styles; being less combative; being more consensus and solution oriented; being more practical and supportive of other staff and so forth”.*<sup>9</sup>

Barbara Moses is a leading organizational career management consultant who authors a regular column entitled “Career Intelligence” in Canada’s National Newspaper, the Globe and Mail. In a recent article, Ms. Moses characterized the new, successful workplace in terms that are consistent with the qualities described here. Ms. Moses writes of those organizations listed in the most recent edition of Canada’s Top 100 Employers:

*“What makes them so special is that they each have their own unique personality, clearly articulated values that are implemented, celebrate individual differences and build on individuals’ unique strengths.”*<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, Ms. Moses also makes a direct link between this kind of work environment and the retention of female employees. In the same article, she asserts that women who find themselves in the “full-throttle, work-as-an-extreme-sport, only-results-matter culture” of many organizations are feeling alienated and lament having to hang their personality and expressiveness at the corporate door. In the past, women felt obliged to manage this dynamic by conforming to it. Now, with women’s skills at an increasing premium and new choices emerging for women, Ms. Moses says they’re quitting:

*“They’re quitting organizations not because they can’t get ahead but because they’ve looked around and said, “I’m too good for this”. They flee to more life-friendly employers or set up their own businesses.”*<sup>11</sup>

A workplace that attracts and retains women constitutes good business practice. Employee satisfaction and engagement improves both the “bottom line” (lower costs of turnover, absenteeism etc.) as well as the “top line” –organizational productivity, revenue and customer satisfaction. A workplace culture that attracts and retains women will foster the very changes being demanded of successful organizations in today’s global context. Success in the new economy depends on new styles of management, and those same styles create workplace cultures attractive to women. In the face of these dynamics and considerations, there is value in exploring what women need and want in the workplace. Women and men, employers and employees, all share in the responsibility for its realization. In the next section of the report, workplace culture is examined, and a more in depth consideration is given to what women want and need in their workplace.

## Section Two

### EXAMINING CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACE CULTURE

#### INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this study, the fundamental issue under consideration is **what women value in a workplace, and the issues, challenges and dynamics that impact on their recruitment and retention decisions**. This study sought out a broad and comprehensive range of input and opinion from women. The research and literature search was Canadian-based, and generalized across a variety of occupations and work environments. Local consultations, while limited to a relatively small sampling of women (approximately 20), were also diverse, and engaged women of a variety of ages, occupations categories and income levels.

Although the research was broad-based, the findings were highly consistent. The primary conclusion drawn from this research is the following:

*The top consideration for women in retention and recruitment is their perception of job quality. Women assess job quality on an environmental, rather than a functional basis. Workplace Culture defines women's workplace experiences.*

## Section Two

### PART A: EXAMINING THE MEANING AND IMPLICATIONS OF WORKPLACE CULTURE

What is workplace culture? It includes the beliefs, attitudes, practices, norms and customs that characterize a workplace. Workplace culture shapes an organization's management practices, workplace behaviour, and problem-solving mechanisms. It is 'how things are done around here'.

Workplace culture can be both explicit and implied. For example, a workplace can be characterized by frequent and often unplanned overtime, such as unscheduled meetings habitually held late in the day and extending into the evening. Rewards and promotion can be tied to working long hours and minimizing the influence and impact of personal and family commitments in the workplace.

Workplace culture is conspicuous in today's workplace because it is increasingly problematic, for both men and for women. In the knowledge-based, globally competitive economy, the rate of job change and evolution is escalating, along with the pressure to acquire and utilize new skills and knowledge. Business practices and operations are increasingly complex, while efficiency pressures and resource shortages feed the "more with less" workplace cultural dynamic. All of these factors cultivate a typical workplace culture that demands more and more of its employees, and often overextends them. This trend is borne out by a variety of statistics, variables and trends captured in the *Life-work Compendium, 2001: 150 Canadian Statistics on Work, Family & Well-Being*.<sup>12</sup>

## The Recruitment & Retention Of Women: *What Do Women Want?*

Most crucial to this discussion is the consideration of workplace culture within the broader context of both men's and women's lives. At the same time as the nature of work and the culture of the workplace have become more complex, intense and more demanding, so have worker's personal lives. This dynamic creates life-work conflict, a primary issue in the lives of working men and women today. The *Life-work Compendium 2001* characterizes its statistics on Life-work Issues and the Employee as clear evidence that time stress and life-work conflict is "becoming a significant and visible issue", and that roughly half of the Canadian labour force is experiencing conflict between their work and non-work lives.<sup>13</sup>

Much of today's stress for men and women in the workplace is caused by conflict between work and family responsibilities. The Vanier Institute of the Family estimates that employees' stress-related disorders cost Canadian businesses an estimated 12 billion dollars a year.<sup>14</sup> Research suggests that life-work conflict is most pronounced for working women, who, while dramatically increasing their workplace presence and scope of responsibility, continue to also carry a greater scope of family and domestic responsibilities than men. Research clearly demonstrates that women, irrespective of their labour force participation, retain primary responsibility for care of home and family. This creates a dynamic which has been labelled the "second shift"<sup>15</sup> for women, where they work all day, then come home to domestic/family responsibilities. It is interesting to note, as well, the following extract from *Report One of the 2001 National Work-Life Conflict Study*:

*[data collected during the study shows that...] women in managerial and professional positions in our sample spent more time in child care per week (11.5 hours) than the women in non-professional or technical positions. They also spent more time in childcare than their male counterparts in managerial and professional positions. Their spouses were no more likely than any other group of men in the sample to share responsibility for child care – despite the heavier work demands assumed by these women. These data would suggest that many professional women in Canada have bought into the concept of "supermom" and place very high demands on themselves with respect to both work and family.<sup>16</sup>*

An appreciation of workplace culture as a source of life-work conflict for women sets an important context for understanding the qualities and features that women seek out and value in the workplace. While psychosocial and cultural considerations undoubtedly play into women's workplace needs and expectations, the pragmatics and stressors of life and work create bottom-line workplace needs for women, too.

# Section Two

## PART B: PROFILING WHAT WOMEN VALUE IN THE WORKPLACE

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### 1. RESEARCH FINDINGS

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Barbara Moses characterizes women as “essentially, relational beings”<sup>17</sup>. The Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) recently surveyed men and women to consider what they want in a job, and how they are experiencing the transition to a knowledge-based economy<sup>18</sup>. The survey results are consistent with Ms. Moses’ characterization: they suggest that women are more likely than men to value good communication, declared employer commitment and respect, and flexibility, so as to allow them to pursue life-work balance. To a greater extent than men, they also value a sense of stability in their work environment and collegiality in their work relationships. Women are less likely than men to say that new technology has had a positive impact on their job security.

In her article, “Workplaces that Work”<sup>19</sup>, researcher Denise McLean identifies key features and criteria that must be in place to realize a workplace culture that is inclusive of women and attracts and retains women with the skills and talents that will help an organization succeed. The features she cites include:

- 1 Cultural norms and values that support positive relations between men and women;
- 2 A freedom from stereotyping about women’s and men’s roles and occupations;
- 3 Conditions (work schedules, job titles, physical environment) that are inclusive of both men and women;
- 4 A strong critical mass of women (usually 30 per cent or more);
- 5 Positive, functional interpersonal relations;
- 6 Gender inclusive conditions and freedom from stereotypes;
- 7 Opportunities for advancement;
- 8 An emphasis on reducing sources of unnecessary stress such as harassment and work-family conflict.

### 2. LOCAL CONSULTATION FINDINGS

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Discussions with women who work in Hamilton were consistent with these findings: one local employee stated that “the quality of my work experience is based mostly on the strength of my working relationships and my sense of belonging to and being valued by the organization. What I do, and even how much money I make, is secondary to that”. Discussions with local women showed that generally, there is heightened acuity to communications and interpersonal relations among women, and it manifests both negatively and positively. Some women lamented the perpetuation of stereotypes and self-destructive behaviours in their workplaces, as modelled by other women. In other cases, women felt great support and empathy from their female colleagues, and valued it tremendously. Women consistently expressed a sense of having to work concertedly to maintain life-work harmony. Some felt they were more successful than others.

Input gathered from women who work in Hamilton also suggests that workplace experiences are significantly influenced by the demographics of a given organization, particularly the female employee’s immediate work unit. In male dominated workplaces (where women are a distinct minority) local women often feel disenfranchised and reactionary to their workplace culture. It should be noted, however, that there were some exceptions to this tendency, and these were attributed to progressive organizational policies and practices. In cases where women feel dissatisfied with their work environments, they often cite an absence of leadership, mechanisms or means for initiating cultural changes. They are fearful that any personal declaration of dissatisfaction will exacerbate rather than improve their work situations. Among those who are dissatisfied with their male-dominated work environments, the prevailing perception is that their personal options are limited to conforming or leaving. A local woman left the field of law enforcement, because, as a woman, “I got tired of feeling isolated, and of my gender always being so conspicuous in what I did. The guys I worked with weren’t bad guys; they just couldn’t get past the fact that I was a woman. No one knew quite what to make of me”.

The most functional work environments identified by women in Hamilton have profiles consistent with the key attributes identified in “Workplaces that Work”. In terms of organizations with positive gender relations and the active support of life-work balance, many of Hamilton’s leading employers were organizations and work units that had a critical mass of women and a roughly middle-age (thirty-to-forty something) age demographic. The ‘success’ of these environments for women was attributed to the fact that people understood and were respectful of their differences, were deliberate about managing them, and (somewhat paradoxically) worked as a team to treat people as individuals. Job flexibility was paramount, and was realized through collective and coordinated means: colleagues ‘cover off’ each other in situations that necessitate absence from work, or accommodate necessary adjustments, such as an inability to travel to an out of town meeting. A sound human resource framework, and concerted efforts by leadership/management and employees to “walk the talk” were seen as necessary enablers to this type of work culture. It was also acknowledged it takes more than merely will to realize a work environment of this nature. Certain organizational attributes, such as a minimum level of infrastructure, and particular types of job functions, lend themselves to the realization of this kind of work culture.

# Section Three

## CREATING WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR WOMEN

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### INTRODUCTION

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Research suggests that the most prevalent workplace dynamic affecting working women today is life-work conflict. Correspondingly, what women most need in the face of this pressure is a workplace culture that helps them to manage their multifaceted lives. Women - and men, too - need flexible, supportive work environments. Within such workplace culture women particularly value good communications and positive interpersonal relations. While there is a general appreciation of this factor among employers and employees, there remains an unfortunate lag between understanding that this issue exists, and actually doing something about it.

This last section of this report endeavours to provide information, advice and practical tips to Hamilton employers and to employees, in an effort to facilitate the realization of workplaces that work better for women in our community.

# Section Three

## PART A: WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO?

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### 3.A.1. SET APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

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Research<sup>20</sup> suggests that certain organizational policies and priorities support the development of female-friendly workplaces. Those priorities that make an organization “best in class” for Canadian women include:

- 1 Demonstrated commitment to life-work balance;
- 2 Programs, including effective professional development programs, that attract and retain women at all levels of the organization;
- 3 A demonstrated management commitment to gender diversity;
- 4 A focus on harassment and organizational culture, including publishing of harassment policies and monitoring of complaint resolutions, and
- 5 Periodic organizational audits, including reviews of performance criteria and evaluations, to assess systemic barriers to women’s advancement.

### 3.A.2. MANAGE YOUR ORGANIZATION ACCORDINGLY

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To begin a process of creating a workplace of this nature, managers are encouraged to:

- 1 Gain a better understanding of the gender barriers faced by women;
- 2 Develop programs that foster workplace diversity;
- 3 Create measures that can be integrated into employee performance reviews;
- 4 Communicate information about the importance of respectful workplace relationships;
- 5 Establish policies and practices that make employees aware of and accountable for inappropriate behaviour that inhibits women's advancement, and
- 6 'Walk the talk'. Cultural norms can only be changed by those who model, set and measure them.

### 3.A.3. MARKET YOUR ORGANIZATION ACCORDINGLY

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In terms of organizations better aligning themselves with what women want and need: employers should focus on both cultivating and rendering more apparent in their communication processes the aspects of their workplace that attract and retain women:

- 1 The Canadian Policy Research Networks encourages employers to include information on 'soft issues' (e.g. commitment, respect and communication) in their recruitment strategies;
- 2 Employers should engage female employees in planning and policy development processes, and create various forums for information sharing and the exchange of ideas and opinions.

# Section Three

## PART B: BEST ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN HAMILTON

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In the course of this research assignment, the organizational policies and practices of three of Hamilton's leading employers were examined. These three organizations – Dofasco, Hamilton Health Sciences, and Hamilton Police Services – represent Hamilton's three largest employment sectors: Manufacturing, Health Care, and the Service Sector. A brief operational and policy profile of each organization, and summaries of their relevant organizational efforts to create more female-friendly work environments, are provided here.

### 1. DOFASCO

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Dofasco was recognized as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers in 2003, and is recognized for its numerous and various human resource policies and practices that promote health and wellness among its employees. Like the HPS, it is a large organization with a predominantly male workforce, and recognizes the many challenges inherent to the minority role of women in its workforce. Among its notable and relevant organizational policies and practices:

- Dofasco has made available to all employees Flexible Work Options – this includes reduced work week and work day arrangement, job sharing and personal leaves of absence.
- It has developed programs and policies that foster workplace diversity, including compulsory formalized workplace diversity training for all employees, and a policy entitled "Respect & Behaviour in the Workplace", to which employees are held accountable.
- Communication and information sharing among employees and management is cultivated through concerted, extensive efforts, including a Dofasco Intranet Site, departmental Health and Safety meetings, activities and initiatives for its employees.

### 2. HAMILTON HEALTH SCIENCES (HHS)

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Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS), a consortium of five unique hospitals and a cancer centre, is Hamilton's largest single employer, with a predominantly female workforce comprised primarily of nurses. The organization has been recognized by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) Employer of the Year Award and lauded for its progressive human resource policies. Consultations undertaken with the Human Resource Management Team at HHS revealed numerous human resource policies and practices designed to bolster morale and address women's needs for flexibility and options, in order to achieve life-work balance.

- HHS makes a concerted and deliberate effort to recognize and reward achievement among its personnel. They also endeavour to ensure ongoing professional development and mobility opportunities for their employees, providing them with opportunities to assume leadership roles in special projects, and to acquire experience in a range of work contexts.
- Numerous flexible work arrangements are in place across the organization, as the functional and regulatory requirements of the positions permit. Such flexibilities include 4 over 5 day work schedules, job sharing and combined scheduling.
- In its labour and employee relations, the organization places an emphasis on clarity and dialogue in its communications. HHS representatives cited good communication as the premise of a quality workplace.

### 3. HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES (HPS)

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Hamilton Police Services (HPS), was named as one of Canada's top 100 Employers in 2003. HPS is consistently recognized for its progressive human resource policies, and its deliberate efforts to recruit and retain women for police service in Hamilton. There are formidable and unique challenges associated with the participation of women in the police service, particularly for a large urban force such as Hamilton's.

- The HPS employs a number of specific communication, recruitment and outreach practices to inform and encourage women and other under-represented groups in the community to consider a career in police service. They have instituted programs that foster workplace diversity, including an Individual Mentoring Program that provides targeted recruits, including women, with specific supports through the police recruitment process.
- Specific performance review measures and promotion policies are in place in the HPS, to not only address diversity but to also hold employees accountable for its active promotion, as a condition of their own advancement.
- Concerted communication and consultation policies and structures are in place within the service. For example, the Service's **Family Issues Committee**, provides an ongoing forum for discussion and effective resolution of workplace issues effecting women. The organization's Values and Ethics Statement, as declared in its Business Plan 2003-2006 includes a statement of belief "in the respect for, value of and equitable treatment of all individuals in our diverse community and our diverse organization". *(extracted from the HPS Business Plan, 2003-2006)*

The innate nature of police work and its functional requirements, along with the male-dominated, paramilitary culture of law enforcement, will always present challenges to female employees and to their employers at HPS. However, those challenges are being met through concerted and comprehensive efforts at the HPS.

**It is recognized that the specific policies and practices of these large employers, each possessing significant infrastructure, are not broadly replicable across the Hamilton Employer Community. Nonetheless, they serve as excellent illustrations of employer commitment to the development of policies and priorities that support the development of female-friendly workplaces.**

# Section Three

## PART C: WHAT CAN EMPLOYEES DO?

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Achieving life-work balance constitutes one of the primary career challenges of our day, particularly for women. While the development of corporate life-work policies is a responsibility of employers, their implementation and their integration necessitates the cooperative effort of employees AND employers.

To achieve life-work management necessitates a personal commitment to:

- Taking control of your working life;
- Being less reactionary to 'unhealthy' workplace dynamics;
- Being more deliberate about recognizing what is substantively required, as opposed to compelled by a workplace culture that implies that "that's just the way we do things around here".

In her book, *What Next? The Complete Guide to Taking Control of your Working Life*<sup>21</sup> Barbara Moses identifies a number of key strategies for women to consider in restoring and maintaining life-work balance. They include the following:

### 1. ESTABLISH REALISTIC TARGETS

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Men and women often overschedule themselves, and create personal expectations that are out of line with what can reasonably be achieved. Contingencies are often overlooked. Research suggest that women are particularly hard on themselves in reconciling what they thought they could do to what they actually could do.

### 2. UNDERTAKE PERSONAL PRIORITY SETTING

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Undertake personal priority setting and differentiate between that which is urgent and that which is important. Analysis of prevailing workplace culture suggest that one of our unhealthy cultural norms is the imbuing of tasks and responsibilities with a greater sense of urgency and time-sensitivity than they actually have. It is important to consider work commitments and obligations in a broader life context at times, so as to perceive of their meaning and implications more realistically.

### 3. YOU CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE, AND YOU CAN'T REALLY HAVE IT ALL

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Reconcile yourself to the fact that you can't please everyone, and you can't really have it all. In contemporary society, women are often much harder on themselves than they should be. Many women wear overachievement like a badge of honour, and never satisfy their own lofty expectations of what constitutes "success" or "achievement". As a result, many of the stressors that create life-work conflict are internally created, not externally imposed. Women, especially those in managerial and professional positions, need to pace themselves and abandon the aspiration to be all things to all people, at any given time.

## CONCLUSION

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Women occupy a place of significant, strategic and ever-growing importance in the working world. As our personal and work worlds become more integrated, more demanding and more complex, so are they both harder to harmonize and more intrinsically tied to our economic and social well-being. As a result, there is both value and necessity in a critical examination of women's workplace experiences, in Canada and in our own Hamilton community, for the purpose of endeavouring to improve them. This report has endeavoured to facilitate the improvement process by illuminating the world of work as it currently impacts on women, and suggesting ways in which employers and employees can all play a part in making it better.

# Appendix A

## RESOURCES & TOOLS TO FACILITATE FEMALE-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE CREATION

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Employers and employees can access excellent resources and materials to facilitate the development of more women-friendly workplaces. The following short list of resources may be useful to employers and to employees in considering ways to realize change in their working lives, and in their workplaces

- 1 **The Centre of Excellence for Women's Advancement**, a unit within the Conference Board of Canada's Organizational Performance group, carries out applied research on specific questions related to the retention, development, and advancement of women in Canadian organizations. The Centre is developing practical and timely learning and development strategies to help organizations to fully access, develop, and utilize the skills and resources that they have available to them. The Centre has developed a Gender Diversity Tool Kit, which is a series of publications about effective practices that address barriers to the development, retention and advancement of Canadian women. These documents can be obtained free of charge from the Conference Board of Canada. More information on the Centre of Excellence for Women's Advancement is available on the web: [www.conferenceboard.ca](http://www.conferenceboard.ca)
- 2 There are a variety of excellent **Planning Guides and Tools** available to employers and to employees for developing and implementing Flexible Work Arrangements, and promoting more family-friendly work environments. A number of excellent resources have been developed by the Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being at the University of Guelph, and can be viewed and /or purchased online: [www.uguelph.ca/cfww](http://www.uguelph.ca/cfww)
- 3 The Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) has developed a website [www.jobquality.ca](http://www.jobquality.ca) which provides comprehensive, public and user-friendly information on the quality of work in the Canadian labour market. The qualitative and quantitative information provided on this website provides users with an integrated and comprehensive approach to understanding what makes a good job, and why it matters to people, firms, the economy and society.

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- <sup>1</sup> "The Feminization of Work" from *Canadian Social Trends*, Spring 2004: published by Statistics Canada, 2004.
- <sup>2</sup> Earning Statistics for the Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area, 2001 Census; Statistics Canada.
- <sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada 2003, as reported on the website of the Ontario Women's Directorate [www.gov.on.ca/mczcr/owd](http://www.gov.on.ca/mczcr/owd)
- <sup>4</sup> As reported by the Canadian Policy Research Network, Family Network: April 8, 2004.
- <sup>5</sup> Denise McLean. "Workplaces that Work", The Centre of Excellence for Women's Advancement, The Conference Board of Canada; 2003.
- <sup>6</sup> Quoted in D. McLean, P. Brady, K. Bachmann, "Balance at the Top: Encouraging Life-work Effectiveness for Executives, The Conference Board of Canada; 2003, p.3.
- <sup>7</sup> Denise McLean. "Workplaces that Work", The Centre of Excellence for Women's Advancement, The Conference Board of Canada; 2003, pp.5-11.
- <sup>8</sup> Andrea Dulipovici, "Labour Pains: Results of CFIB Surveys on Labour Availability" (Canadian Federation of Independent Business, April 2003) p.1.
- <sup>9</sup> Quoted in L. Wirth, "Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management (Geneva: International Labour Office, 2001).
- <sup>10</sup> B. Moses, "It's Time for Girls to be Girls at Work", Globe Careers, The Globe and Mail, March 12, 2004.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> This compendium is published by the Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being, University of Guelph, 2001.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 49.
- <sup>14</sup> "Can Canadian businesses afford work-family conflict?" © 2004, Vanier Institute of the Family: [www.vifamily.ca](http://www.vifamily.ca)
- <sup>15</sup> Quoted in D. McLean, P. Brady, K. Bachmann, "Balance at the Top: Encouraging Life-work Effectiveness for Executives, The Conference Board of Canada; 2003, p.7.
- <sup>16</sup> This national study by C. Higgins and L. Duxbury was commissioned by Health Canada, and examined how key work-life factors have changed over time. Report One was released in July 2002.
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- <sup>18</sup> K. Hughes, G. Lowe, G. Schellenberg 'Men's and Women's Quality of Work in the New Canadian Economy" February 2003.
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- <sup>20</sup> D. McLean, P. Brady, K. Bachmann, "Balance at the Top: Encouraging Life-work Effectiveness for Executives, The Conference Board of Canada; 2003, p.1.
- <sup>21</sup> © 2003, Dr. Barbara Moses, DK Publishing, Inc.

# **BUSINESS, LABOUR & COMMUNITY**

**Together... developing today's workforce  
for tomorrow's workplace!**

The Hamilton Training Advisory Board is a community based not-for-profit organization established to act as a local catalyst for labour force development. The Board's strength lies in its unique model with representation from business, labour, education, and training and equity groups.

The Board is in touch with local labour force issues and trends. Annually our activities include:

- An annual overview of the labour market in Hamilton
- Facilitation of an inclusive and consultative community planning process that addresses labour force development issues

The Training Board has been involved in a number of projects and partnerships that promote building a skilled workforce in Hamilton. The Recruitment and Retention of Women Research Report is only one.

For information on all our projects and for copies of our project reports, please visit our website [www.htab.ca](http://www.htab.ca).



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