



Tools, resources and ideas for employers to support the participation and success of women in trades

Gender diversity is good for business. If we're to have any chance of meeting demand, businesses need to look beyond the usual 'go-to' groups when recruiting as there are few women working in the trades, and we're encouraging change.

In addition to supporting gender equality from a human rights and diversity inclusion perspective; promoting, attracting, hiring and retaining more women in the trades' workforce has major economic benefits for employers.

The trades are for everyone

A career in the trades is open to anyone – regardless of gender, ethnicity, or any other criteria. Female participation in the trades remains low, but there is plenty of potential. For example, females make up half of the population, but only 2% of electrical apprentices are female.

Across the automotive, construction, engineering and manufacturing industries, the number of women working in trades jobs is low, ranging from less than 1% to nearly 10%. Only 17% of employers in these sectors employ women.

Why should employers hire women?

Companies are actively targeting women to recruit into teams because of the positive benefits gender diversity brings to the teams and company. With more women working in the trades, we can add more skills, perspective, and diversity into the workforce – a win-win for everyone involved.

What can you do?

Four actions that employers can take to attract women:

- Advertising jobs online and showing support for women in trades,
- Offering flexible work arrangements,
- Partnering with schools and providers of work experience placements, and
- Broadening the base of people employers talk to when recruiting.

How can you do it?

Here are six useful resources and links to other published information that may help make your workforce more diverse and assist in growing your business.

1 Do your job adverts use gender-biased language?

Without realising it, we all use language that is subtly 'gender-coded'. Society has certain expectations of what men and women are like, how they differ, and this flows into the language we use. This linguistic gender-coding shows up in job adverts as well, and research has shown that it puts women off applying for jobs that are advertised with masculine-coded language.

This site is a quick way to check whether a job advert has the kind of subtle linguistic gender-coding that has this discouraging effect. Find out more and test your adverts at <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>

2 Flexible working arrangements - how they work

Employment New Zealand has published this comprehensive guide for both employers and employees. It explains how the “right to request” under Part 6AA of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act 2007 works. Read it now at:

<https://www.employment.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/tools-and-resources/publications/0d0258f22f/flexible-working-arrangement-guide.pdf>

3 Job matching services

Try this dedicated job-matching service for putting capable and willing career seekers in touch with employers looking for apprentices. <https://bcito.org.nz/employers/find-an-apprentice/>

We have an opportunity to raise awareness among employers about the benefits of hiring women. Through funding provided by Ako Aotearoa and the Ministry of Women, a research project has highlighted a number of opportunities for women and employers.

<https://ako.ac.nz/knowledge-centre/what-are-the-characteristics-of-an-effective-learning-journey-for-women-entering-trades/part-1-research-programme-overview/>

4 Parental leave

Employment New Zealand has published everything you need to know about parental leave and employment law, including who is eligible, associated entitlements such as government-funded parental leave payments and how, as an employer, you should respond to a request for parental leave. <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/>

5 Pre-employment Guide

The Human Rights Commission has compiled this handy A-Z Guide for pre-employment based on actual questions that both employers and employees have asked. It's got loads of valuable answers for business owners who wonder about what conforms to Human Rights legislation.

https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/1514/6889/8404/HRC_A-Z_Booklet_2016.pdf

6 Supporting Women in the Trades branding

Show you're a company or individual that is inclusive and diverse. Tell New Zealand you're a business or person who supports women in construction across all your channels.

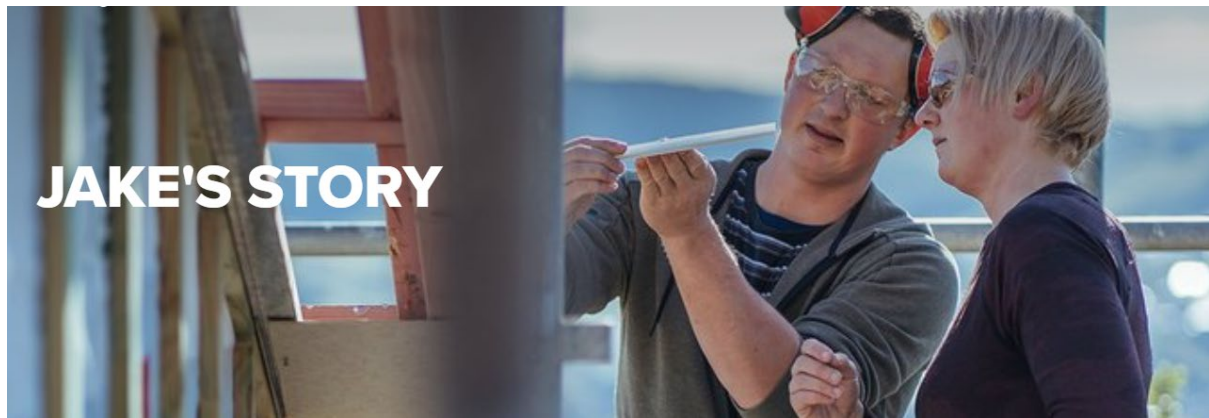
You can use the Supporting Women in the Trades icon to help promote your support of diversity and inclusiveness in your business on any of the following business-related promotional material:

- Company website
- Stationery — letterhead and business cards
- Vehicle decals
- Advertising in print and online
- Site signage
- Workwear

<https://bcito.org.nz/resources/women-in-construction/support-women/>



How have other employers done it?



Jake's a walk-the-walk type of boss, when it comes to hiring women.

Jake Lashman, owner of Legacy Custom Construction, believes gender doesn't even come into play when hiring his apprentices. In fact, he interviewed six people for Victoria's position and said "she was the most suitable for the job".

Victoria's got a different way of seeing things that Jake loves. "She thinks differently and comes up with great ideas." In fact, what he values the most about her are her unteachable qualities like her accountability, her honesty, and built-in keenness to learn. She's always asking questions.



Interestingly, Victoria reckons she's the lucky one, saying she "struck gold with Jake". Her previous boss of only two months tried to sway her from a career in the trades. But not Jake. Jake sees real value in Victoria, who's a key part of his three-person team with her determined mind-set.

Legacy Custom Construction is a growing company, doing everything between high-end new builds in Eastbourne to two-storey townhouses in Johnsonville, and Jake plans on growing his team with like-minded individuals like Victoria.

He may not realise it, but Victoria admits her hard work is amplified by having an awesome boss. "I'm already hardworking, but the fact that Jake's awesome, I want to do the best I can for him." Walking-the-walk with inclusivity, seems to be paying off.

"It's about being inclusive and fair, showing equal rights and culture in my company."

KEITH'S STORY

Keith says the key is finding good attitude people. He's found that with Chloe.

Keith Nightingale, from McMillan & Lockwood Bay of Plenty, took apprentice Chloe on two years ago, and has never looked back. It wasn't a conscious decision to take on a female apprentice, she just proved herself in the yard during a four-week major clean up and she asked for a job.

There haven't been any tasks Chloe has struggled with. She can hold her own and has the right attitude, to say the least. Her positive personality and communication skills are making a real impact on the team. He's noticed other staff upping their game too.

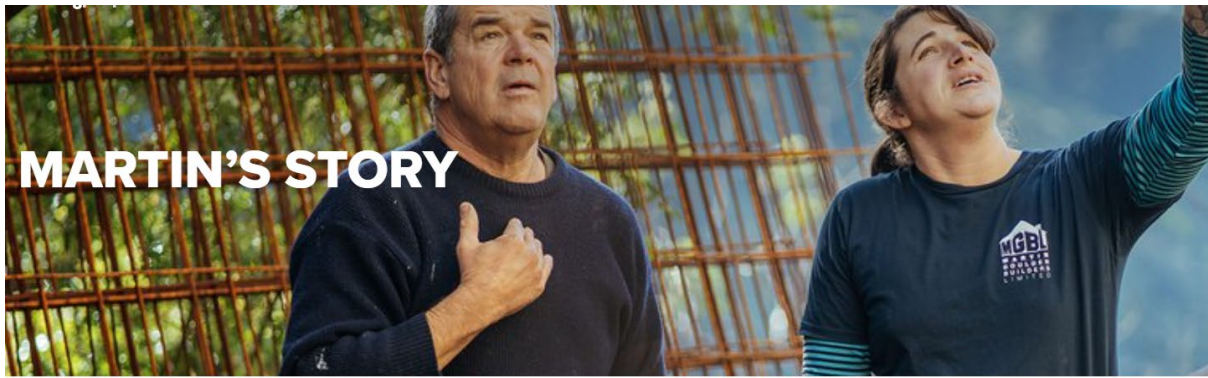


"Chloe doesn't take the soft option," says Keith. There have been times where she's had to make big decisions and she's always made the choice to get out there and get on with the job. "She pushes her own barrow and drives herself to be a good builder", which shows in her work.

"Chloe has the attitude to get stuck in and learn as much as she can."

Keith says genetics has a lot to answer for, as it's the reason why he's in the trades. He's got a degree in Engineering but never had the temperament for being office bound. He loves challenges and puzzles, and to him building a building is like one giant puzzle.

His proudest puzzles that involved Chloe have been the Bayfair mall expansion, the new build of a BestStart childcare centre, and the current Reef Apartment remediation works at the Mount. Chloe's an integral part of his team and the business's success.



MARTIN'S STORY

Martin puts his employees' families first, which seems to be a big reason his company's thriving.

Martin Goulden has a building company, but more than that, he has a philosophy: 'Family is more important than work'. His employee Rachel, who finished her carpentry apprenticeship in 2018, says this understanding of caring for family makes him the "best boss I've ever worked for". It also makes her work harder.

Rachel describes Martin Goulden Ltd as "big for a small business". There's 18 in the team, four of whom are women, and all bar one completed their training through the company. "I don't see it as a male/female thing," says Martin, "Rachel brings the same advantages to our business as any employee brings with the same skills and attitude".




"Back in 2015 Rachel was working on a job we were on for a landscape gardener. She had mentioned to our staff that she was interested in a building apprenticeship. The quality of her work and attitude had not gone unnoticed."

Martin explains that it's the great relationships with clients that make the jobs memorable. Although one of the most interesting projects he'll never forget was rebuilding the Whale Sculpture on the City to Sea Bridge for the Wellington City Council. Every job's unique, and with a team that's hard working there's no wonder they're up to their 1187th job, and counting.

Supporting organisations and website links for additional information:

	<p>https://bcito.org.nz/resources/women-in-construction/</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/BCITO.org.nz/groups/?ref=page_internal</p>
	<p>https://www.connexis.org.nz/ultimit-women-infrastructure/</p> <p>https://www.connexis.org.nz/girls-with-hi-vis/</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/ConnexisITO/</p>
	<p>https://skills.org.nz/community/women-in-trades/</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/groups/SkillsWomenInTrades/</p>
	<p>https://www.mito.org.nz/get-qualified/success-stories/</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/WomeninTradesNZ/posts/our-friends-at-mito-dont-just-do-automotive-apprenticeships-check-out-their-page/630010784160764/</p>



This project was funded through the Ako Aotearoa National Hub Project Fund. More information is available at <https://ako.ac.nz/knowledge-centre/what-are-the-characteristics-of-an-effective-learning-journey-for-women-entering-trades/>

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