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Workplaces That Work: Inclusive Policies for Growth and Success

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Clune Construction



Awareness Practice



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Challenges in the Workplace

1. Gender Discrimination and Bias, Culture
2. Career Progression Barriers
3. Work-Life Balance





Gender Discrimination and Bias, Culture

Other research has identified social networks of powerful men, from which women are excluded, as barriers for women in engineering workplaces (Faulkner, 2009).

Faulkner. (2009). Doing gender in engineering workplace cultures. II. Gender in/authenticity and the in/visibility paradox. *Engineering Studies*, 1(3), 169–89.

For example, a number of qualitative studies conducted in engineering workplaces found that women are often not seen by their co-workers and colleagues as full-fledged members of the engineering profession (Tonso, 2007; McIlwee & Robinson, 1992; Faulkner, 2009) — they are “highly visible as women yet invisible as engineers” (Faulkner, 2009, p. 169).

Tonso, K. L. (2007). *On the outskirts of engineering: Learning identity, gender, and power via engineering practice*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

McIlwee, J. S., & Robinson, J. G. (1992). *Women in engineering: Gender, power, and workplace culture*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Faulkner. (2009). Doing gender in engineering workplace cultures. II. Gender in/authenticity and the in/visibility paradox. *Engineering Studies*, 1(3), 169–89.

As a result, many women in technical roles report difficulty forging strong identities as engineers or computing professionals, and many female engineers describe an increased pressure to prove themselves (Hatmaker, 2013; Smith, L., 2013).

Hatmaker, D. M. (2013). Engineering identity: Gender and professional identity negotiation among women engineers. *Gender, Work, and Organization*, 20(4), 382–96.

Smith, L. (2013). Working hard with gender: Gendered labour for women in male dominated occupations of manual trades and information technology (IT). *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion*, 32(6), 592–603.

In one study of women in private-sector technical jobs, a third said that they felt extremely isolated at work. In the same study, four of 10 female engineers and computing professionals reported lacking role models, while about half reported lacking mentors (Hewlett, Buck Luce et al., 2008).

Hewlett, S. A., Buck Luce, C., Servon, L. J., Sherbin, L., Shiller, P., Sosnovich, E., & Sumberg, K. (2008). *The Athena factor: Reversing the brain drain in science, engineering, and technology* (Harvard Business Review Research Report). Boston, MA: Harvard Business Publishing.



Gender Discrimination and Bias, Culture



The first study to comprehensively investigate factors related to women's decisions to leave or stay in engineering careers (Fouad et al., 2012) is described in chapter 9. It identifies factors such as **work environment** and **access to training and development** as key to women's decisions to stay in or leave their engineering jobs.

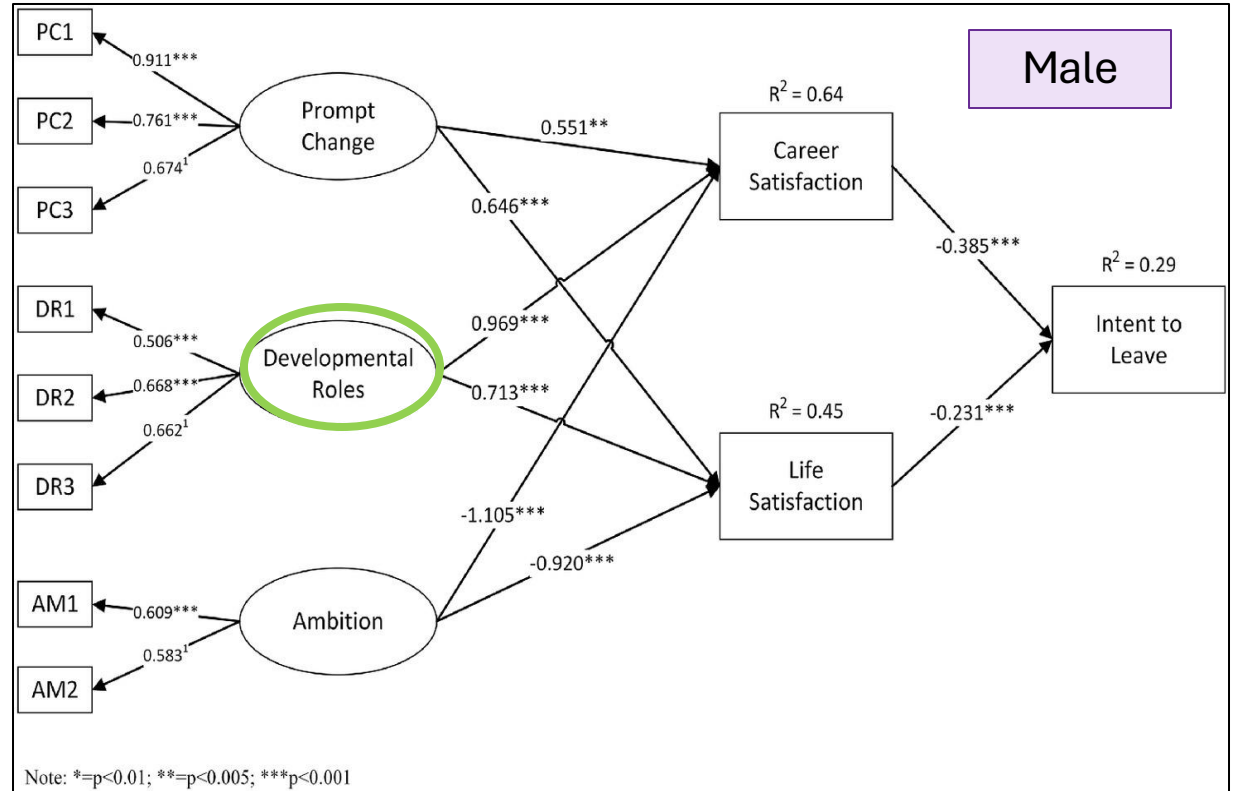
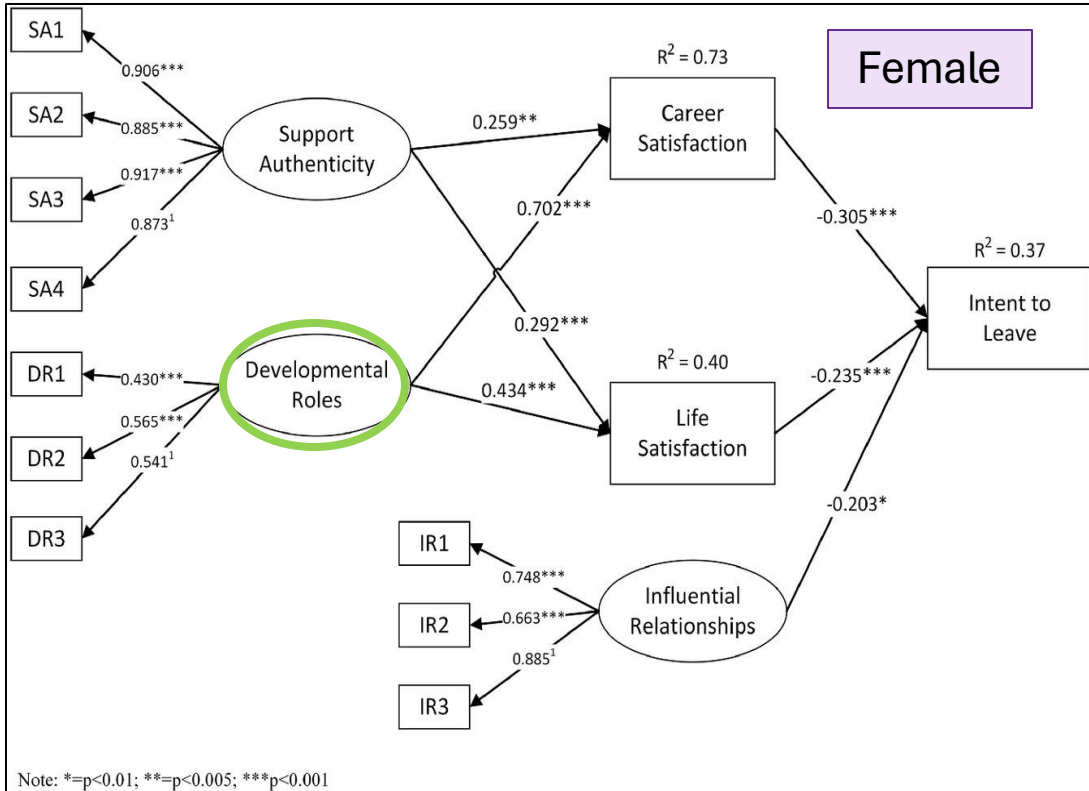
Fouad, N. A., Singh, R., Fitzpatrick, M. E., & Liu, J. P. (2012). Stemming the tide: Why women leave engineering. University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. Final rep., NSF Award 827553.

When employers in male-majority fields such as engineering and technology expect employees to work long hours (more than 50 hours per week), **women with children are much more likely than men or childless women not only to leave their employer but to exit** the paid workforce entirely (Cha, 2013).

Cha, Y. (2013). Overwork and the persistence of gender segregation in occupations. *Gender and Society*, 27(2), 158–84.



Career Progression Barriers





Career Progression Barriers

Stretch Assignments

Responsibility

Difficulty

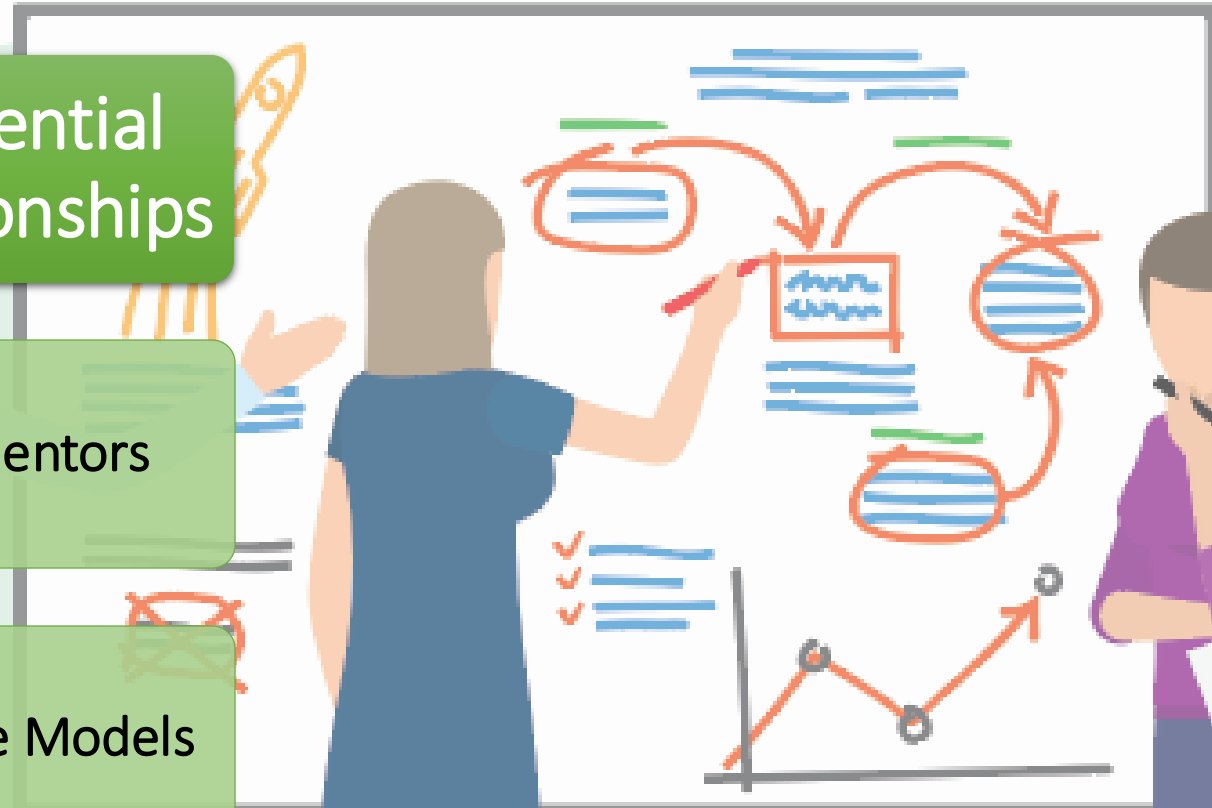
Accountability

Influential Relationships

Mentors

Role Models

Key Decision-makers

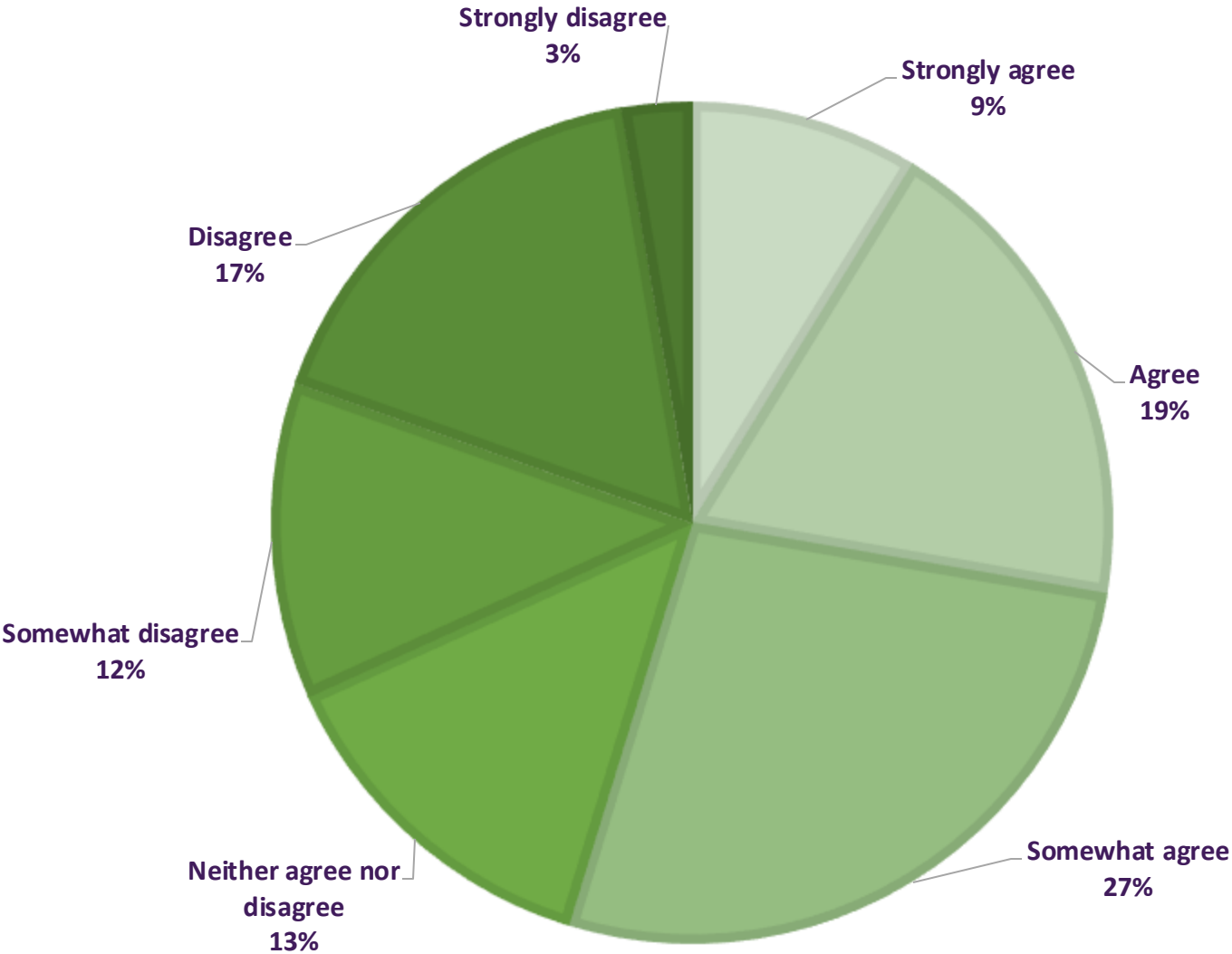




Work-Life Balance



The demands of my work interfere with my home family life.





Creating Workplaces that Work for Women

Build Inclusive Cultures

Promote Equitable Career
Development

Support Work-Life Balance





Build Inclusive Cultures

Recruitment & Hiring

- Gender neutral job descriptions
- Diverse selection committee

Training

- Bias & DEI Training

Performance Review

- Men = Capability
- Women = Proof

Policies

- Documented Anti-harassment Policy and reporting procedure





Promoting Equitable Career Development

Implement Mentor/Sponsorship Program

- Helps employees
 - Develop skills and advance their careers
 - Build their network of colleagues and leaders
 - Improve communication skills
 - Increase employee self-awareness
- Creates collaborative Company Culture

Establish Career Ladders

- Increases transparency which builds trust
- Gives employees the blueprints to advance in their career
- Helps facilitate conversations between supervisors and employees about career progression

Invest in Professional Development

- Tuition Reimbursement Programs provide avenues for continued development outside of onsite training
- Leadership programs at all levels show culture of growth and creates pipeline for internal promotion

Promote Employee Resource Groups

- Builds community and sense of belonging
- Raises cultural awareness and allies support underrepresented groups
- Empowers employees to be their authentic selves



Support Work-Life Balance

- Normalize Remote Work & Flexible Schedules
- Parental Leave for *all parents*
- Childcare options/benefits
- EAPs
- Health Club and/or Mental Health Benefits/Apps
- Non-Traditional Time Off (Mental Health Days, Floating Holiday, Volunteer Time Off)





Recent News Headlines



EXECUTIVE ORDER TO END DEI

"The Biden Administration forced illegal and immoral discrimination programs...That ends today. Americans deserve a government committed to serving every person with equal dignity and respect."

TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER
JANUARY 20



TRUMP: ALL SHOULD HAVE "EQUAL DIGNITY & RESPECT"

FOX NEWS ALERT



What is really going on?

- Corporate DEI is still legal
 - Executive Orders cannot prohibit private employers from lawful activities
- DEI Pushback is not new
 - Affirmative Action rollbacks in college admissions (1990s)
 - Legislation against DEI in public universities and government agencies (2020s)
 - Bud Light (transgender influencer) and Target (LGBTQ+ Pride merch) (2023)
- DEI is NOT about quotas or mandatory training

The Future Of DEI: Employee Resource Groups, Allyship And Partnerships

Julie Kratz Contributor @

Julie Kratz promotes allyship and inclusion.

Follow



Jan 29, 2025, 06:48am EST

Updated Jan 29, 2025, 01:44pm EST



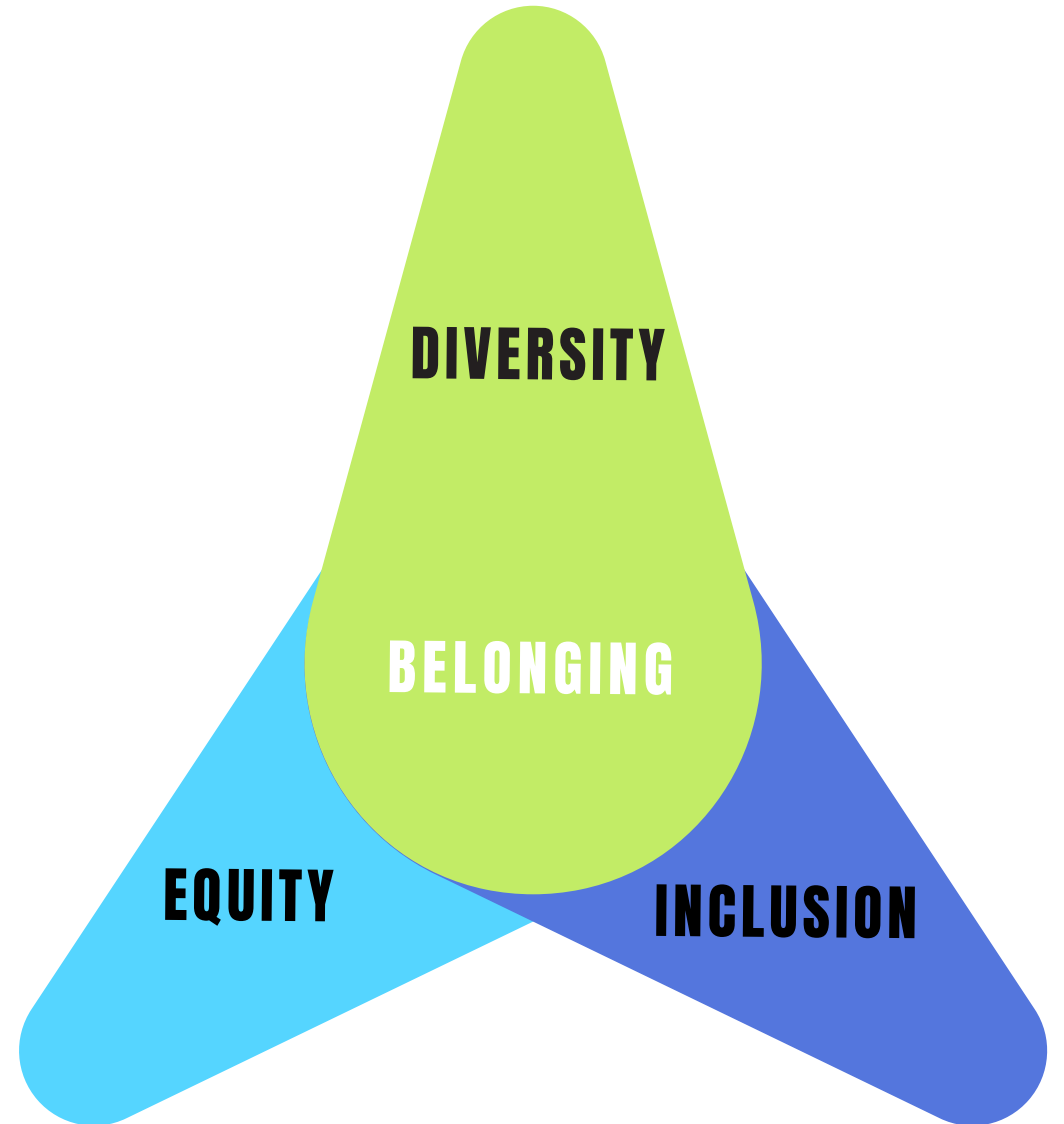
Red Anxious news headline with related newspaper topics. GETTY

Be careful what you believe from the latest anti-DEI headlines. Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is not going away. It's forecasted to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 10% according to [PR Newswire](#)



What DEI is about?

- Diversifying hiring pools
- Creating objective criteria for hiring/promotions
- Educating managers on best practice
- Fosters a sense of belonging



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