
WORKPLACE GENDER BALANCE PROJECT

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGIES FOR CTE PROGRAMS



CTE EDUCATORS:

Do you know that a smaller percentage of CCCS students today are nontraditional (gender) than in 2000?

Over the past 10 years our percentages have decreased and not increased?

The Perkins Act mandates a gender balance performance target in every CTE program?

Does it feel like you have tried everything?

Here are a few more suggestions.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

SMILE!!! – Happy sells.

Request support and assistance from other faculty and staff and explain the importance of workplace balance in your program:

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Counselors/Advisors
- ✓ Other Faculty
- ✓ Administrators
- ✓ Any staff that come in contact with students.

Ask a NT worker from industry to serve on your advisory committee.

Have posters in the classrooms and hallways showing NT workers.

Ask your advisory committee to analyze the appearance of your instructional area. (This can be an exercise at an advisory committee meeting.)

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Is it a pleasant environment?
- ✓ Is it clean and free of industry odors?
- ✓ Are the bathrooms clean and attractive? (Maybe add some eucalyptus.)
- ✓ Are the colors warm and gender neutral? (Not all pink or grey)
- ✓ Are there any live plants?

- ✓ Connect with your area custodian and explain the goals that you are trying to achieve.

Organize a Student Gender Equity Advisory Committee. They will be willing/anxious to assist you with many of these tasks.

Ask your CTSO or advisory committee to plan a tour, job shadow, internship experience or career fair that highlights NT careers.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ NT career day to explore NT careers.
- ✓ Summer orientation program.
- ✓ Arrange job-site visits and experimental work experiences where students can observe the skills involved and meet role models.
- ✓ Introduce a “real person” working in a real job.
- ✓ Schedule presentations by role models.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for students to experience the career, “hands-on”.
- ✓ Offer a workshop in “career options”.
- ✓ Host a tour of the CTE facilities on campus.
- ✓ Invite organizations such as YMCA, YWCA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc. to tour your facilities.
- ✓ Hold a “Powder Puff” event designed to interest women in the trades.
- ✓ **REMEMBER:** Hands-on experience is HUGE !!!!!

Provide recruitment event organizers with the information that is needed to develop a successful tour, job shadow, internship or career fair:

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ It is crucial that presentations include information on salary, benefits and career paths.
- ✓ Encourage NT students and graduates to assist during tours and career fairs.
- ✓ Try to identify potential NT students before enrollment and arrange for a NT role model to meet and visit with them.
- ✓ Think about how you will address questions and concerns from potential students and prepare some talking points.
- ✓ Let potential students know that you are connected with employers that can help get them jobs.
- ✓ Emphasize that both genders are welcome in all programs.
- ✓ One section of new student orientation could deal with gender stereotyping.
- ✓ Present recruitment events a few weeks before class registration.

Work with students, CTSO, advisory committee and other staff to identify or create materials and publicity that advertises the program: (Possibly partner with the Graphic Arts, Journalism, Technical Writing or Marketing Programs.)

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Create fliers and bulletin boards with photos of NT workers, testimonials, and facts about careers.
- ✓ Place announcements and featured stories in school publications.
- ✓ Ask industry partners to help you develop and fund a video of your career area. Research shows that young people want to know what a day in the life of your career is like.
- ✓ Include representations of NT students in audio-visual, instructional, and orientation materials.
- ✓ Arrange publicity that recognizes people working in NT jobs.

- ✓ Publish an article about a successful NT alumni.
- ✓ Place signs/posters on buses, at baseball/soccer/football games.
- ✓ Notify local newspaper, radio, TV media about programs, graduations, successful placements, and support services.
- ✓ Use job and gender specific examples in ads: “Have you ever wondered how lipstick is made? Engineering does that!”
- ✓ Conduct a poster contest, essay contest or cartoon contest.
- ✓ Contact organizations like the Society of Women Engineers, the American Assembly for Men in Nursing and the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools for materials and sponsorships.
- ✓ Ask a team of students to review materials for gender neutrality.

Focus recruiting efforts on students currently enrolled at your school and have not yet decided on a career path.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Issue a personal invitation to attend a NT class or activity.
- ✓ Create fliers/invitations to a class or activity and hand them out in the hall.
- ✓ Plan a “Bring a Friend to Class Day”.
- ✓ Invite especially popular students and others will follow.
- ✓ Invite groups of students who hang out together.
- ✓ Give an award for the student who invites and gets the most friends to enroll.

Send faculty members to a national conference on recruiting NT students.

Share with industry the fact that the Perkins Act mandates a gender balance performance target and request their assistance in reaching that target.

RETENTION STRATEGIES

SMILE – Happy not only sells, it retains!!

Provide the students with a professional role model. You are at the top of the profession, model that!!

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Dress professionally (Uniform, Lab Coat, etc.)
- ✓ Have students dress professionally.
- ✓ Analyze how you talk about workers in your field. Use gender neutral terms. Avoid saying, “You guys,” or “Ladies.”
- ✓ Think about jokes or stories that you or your students tell, are they offensive??
- ✓ **REMEMBER** – Faculty are the most important model of appropriate professional behavior.

Provide a safe, welcoming physical environment for NT students.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Have the advisory committee analyze the appearance of the instructional area. (See the suggestions under recruitment)
- ✓ Be sure to provide uniforms and equipment that fit all students.
- ✓ Have a representative of each gender look around the classroom and lab to check for offensive items.

Raise the level of consciousness of all staff and students regarding gender stereotyping and reinforce this on an ongoing basis.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Involve professional trainers to assist rethinking assumptions about gender stereotypes and related issues. – Involve students.
- ✓ Discuss gender equity with the class, include a discussion of both the classroom and work environment.
- ✓ Consult with your Student Gender Equity Advisory Committee for suggestions on actions to take that will raise consciousness.
- ✓ Plan a unit/seminar on gender stereotyping to be presented early in the first semester of the program.

Work with your advisory committee and/or CTSO officers to develop a plan to provide NT students with support.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Ask your advisory committee to help you arrange mentors for NT students.
- ✓ Provide positive role models such as teachers, parents, community members, advanced students, recent graduates.
- ✓ Establish a NT student support group.
- ✓ Compile a resource list of people working successfully in NT fields. The people on this list can not only provide you with speakers and presenters, but can supply unlimited student support.
- ✓ Provide positive reinforcement.
- ✓ Take quick action in response to harassment.
- ✓ Provide students with information on how to identify allies and mentors.
- ✓ Role-play how to gain acceptance and how to diffuse baiting and teasing.
- ✓ Introduce a counselor so when difficulties arise students know who to contact.
- ✓ Invite families to career awareness activities/open house and enlist their support of their NT student.
- ✓ Prepare a flier/brochure of suggestions and tips on how families can provide NT students support. (Use your advisory committee and Student Gender Equity Advisory Committee for suggestions and assistance.)
- ✓ Be aware of and act quickly to resolve student-to-student hazing in NT programs.
- ✓ **REMEMBER** – Follow NT students carefully so that issues can be diffused and problems solved before they feel it necessary to drop out.

Develop a plan of study that continues past the Community College degree and adds extra benefits for students.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Provide options for adding Business Management and/or Accounting degrees.
- ✓ Include options for journalism and writing skills.

Send faculty to a national conference on teaching and supporting NT students.

ADAPTED FROM:

The Multistate Academic and Vocational Curriculum Consortium, Inc. – Taking the road Less Traveled Educator’s Tool Kit to Prepare Students for Nontraditional Careers,

“Retention, Meeting Student Needs” – Karen Humphrey, Fern Bowling, & Clark R. Harris.

“Recruitment, Challenging Students to be Different” – Vicki Brown, Jim Fliehler, & Clark R. Harris.

National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity.

“Creating Opportunities for Special Populations and Students in Nontraditional Training.”

Project Enter – Gender Equity Tip Sheets, University of Missouri – Columbia

“Ways to Keep Women from Dropping Out of Nontraditional Programs.”

“Achieving Equity Through Gender-Neutral Language.”

“Using Role Models to Encourage Nontraditional Participation.”

National Institute for Women in Trades, Technology and Science. – School-To-Work: Preparing Young women for Nontraditional Careers

“A Trainers Workshop Guide”. – Donna Milgram

Tucson Unified School District – Career and Technical Education

“Tips for Recruiting Nontraditional Students”. – Mike Rask, Boulder Valley

The TACKLE Box Project (Technical Action Coalition to Kindle Lifelong Equity) – Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Career and Technical Education.

“Preparing Young Women for Work and Citizenship in a Technological Society.”