

How to close the gender pay gap within your organization

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One of the most discussed HR topics of 2019 has been the gender pay gap and how to close it. We have seen organizations like the US Women's Soccer Team, Intel, and Citi take strong, public initiatives in the fight for pay equity. However, despite this attention, the gender pay gap issue continues to persist. In fact, nearly half of employees report that the gender pay gap has not changed at their place of work in the last 12-18 months, and 51 per cent do not believe their employers or managers take closing the gender pay gap seriously. These numbers overwhelmingly demonstrate that companies need to openly take action. As an HR professional, these are five steps you can take to help close the gender pay gap at your organization:

1. Listen to employees.

While this may sound extraneous, it is imperative that companies take the time to solicit feedback from their employees about their happiness at the company, perception of the pay gap, and areas where the employees see room for improvement. At the most basic level, this practice will show employees that you care about their happiness and that their voices matter. Opening your ears to listen to their questions, thoughts and concerns is important to them and for the success of your organization.

2. Make a commitment.

Once you have taken the time to listen to your employees, openly make a plan to address their pay gap concerns and commit to it. If you are unsure of where to start, consider investing in compensation management solutions that expose where pay gap issues persist. These solutions are able to omit factors that are often rooted in bias like age, race and gender when determining an employee's total compensation. Removing these factors allows you to make fair compensation decisions based on an employee's qualifications and experience.

3. Start at the recruiting stage.

The reality is that pay gaps continue to persist due to unconscious biases. To combat this, expand recruiting pools to not go back to the same homogeneous sources again and again, and price a job to its value and market rate rather than to the salary history of the candidate. From there, you can level the playing field from the recruitment stage to the retention stage.

4. Be transparent.

Consider reporting on pay gap figures internally or publicly to establish a culture of trust and transparency around compensation within your organization. By the way, if you have not already done this, chances are your employees have

Business, Nottingham, UK.

beaten you to it as nearly half of employees say they would share their salaries with their colleagues.

5. Advocate for change.

As an HR professional, you have the ability to be a voice of change within not only your company but also your industry. Demonstrate to employees

that you take closing the pay gap seriously by advocating for change externally. One company that recently did just that is Intel, which took a major step towards closing the pay gap by announcing it will publicly release employee pay data this year. This type of advocacy establishes a good rapport with current employees and potential candidates. In fact, 63

per cent of workers say they would be more willing to work at a company that discloses its gender pay gap figure each year.

While the gender pay gap cannot be eradicated overnight, these five steps are a good place to start to get your organization on the right track.