

Chapter 1

Phase One: Logistics

Key points made in this chapter

The logistics phase includes the following steps:

- determining the grouping of jobs and their sex predominance
- deciding which job to evaluate
- deciding whether to use committees and whom to choose as representatives, if any
- deciding whether to use a consultant and, if so, how one should be used
- developing a communication strategy — a key component in the pay equity process

Occupational Groups and Gender Predominance

Identifying *occupational groups* and determining their gender predominance is an essential first step to deciding which jobs to evaluate. Occupational groups are groups of jobs that share common traits, such as purpose, or design. Examples of occupational groups are: nursing, tellers, financial services and air traffic control. These groups consist of jobs with a common focus. Occupational groups may be defined either narrowly or broadly, but must make sense and must not be defined so broadly that they lump together jobs that are very different.

An employer must identify occupational groups to comply with the *Guidelines*. It is not sufficient to assume that existing job classifications are acceptable. The following criteria will help an employer determine whether an existing or proposed occupational group makes sense:

- jobs are characterized by similar work;
- jobs probably have the same kind of qualifications, but at different levels;
- jobs have similar career patterns and interchangeable personnel; and,
- jobs may already be grouped together for administrative purposes, have similar wage scales and have common representation in bargaining.

Where doubt exists with respect to the delineation of occupational groups, it is generally preferable to opt for smaller groups.

Once the occupational groups have been defined, the organization can determine the gender predominance of each.

The Gender predominance of a job or occupational group is determined by the number of employees of each sex in that job or group over the twelve-month period preceding a complaint or study. (See the Glossary in Volume I for a definition of gender predominance. See also Section 13 of the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986* [the *Guidelines*] in Appendix B of this volume.)

This information is needed both to plan the job evaluation process and will dictate whether any inequities discovered require redress under the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (the *Act*).

Deciding Which Jobs to Evaluate

The *Act* sets out the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, which employers are required to respect. To do so, an employer may need to assess the value of its jobs and make sure its compensation practices do not discriminate.

Any positions in which similar work is performed will constitute one job. Jobs are the smallest unit to be identified in this process, and are what will actually be evaluated. Job evaluation is about jobs not people. Individual employee differences are not to be considered.

There are different ways of choosing which jobs to evaluate, depending on the organization's goals and strategy and the motivation behind job evaluation.

In some cases, an employer might be faced with a human rights complaint and may decide to deal only with the jobs involved in the complaint. In other cases, the organization may want to perform an audit to see how well it complies with the Human Rights pay equity legislation. Or the organization may choose to evaluate all jobs in order to develop an organizational compensation program which ensures that jobs are paid according to both their relative worth and pay equity requirements.

Possible Job Evaluation Scenarios

- a) The organization initiates a voluntary job evaluation exercise and either:
 - evaluates all jobs to check for internal equity;
 - evaluates some jobs, e.g., only one bargaining unit or only non-unionized jobs to check for problems; or
 - performs an audit and includes a sample of jobs to check for problems to determine if a larger exercise is warranted.

- b) The organization must respond to a complaint under the *Act* and either:
- evaluates only those jobs involved in the complaint;
 - performs an audit of jobs in complaint and some others; or
 - evaluates all jobs to respond to complaint and to check for any other inequities.

Pay Equity Committees

The pay equity job evaluation process does not require a rating or evaluation committee, but is strengthened by having one. Committees with well-chosen and well-trained members can improve the process in a number of ways. For example:

- they ensure a range of insights about jobs, their elements, and their values;
- the work load is distributed among members to help the process move quickly;
- accountability is shared for evaluation results and any changes in job relationships and pay that follow; and
- committees add to the credibility of results if employees and management see the members as being representative and fair.

In summary, pay equity committees should:

- be gender balanced;
- consist of people from different organizational levels;
- be drawn from jobs from different occupations;
- include management and non-management people;
- include members with varying lengths of service;
- include some people that really know the mission and goals of the organization; and
- include someone well-versed in pay equity requirements, if possible.

All of these characteristics should be sought, but a committee also needs to be limited in size if it is to be effective. Six to eight members is a reasonable committee size.

Possible Committees and their Roles

All committees should follow the principle of representativeness in terms of sex, level, and so on. The number and purpose of the committees created will likely depend on the organization's size and resources. Some choices follow.

Steering committee: This committee oversees and approves the various components of the process. It often consists of key decision-makers with signing authority, who are able to

approve actions. Its members may be a combination of management and union personnel and employee representatives for non-unionized jobs.

Job evaluation system committee: It makes decisions about buying, adapting or creating a job evaluation system for the organization's pay equity project. It could have both employer and employee representatives who understand the values and culture of the organization and the purpose of the job evaluation system.

Job evaluation rating committee: This committee rates the jobs using the system chosen. Its usefulness is increased if it includes both credible employer and employee representatives.

Communications committee: A communications committee designs and delivers information and educational material. Often it includes personnel people, members of the job evaluation rating committee, and possibly senior employer and employee representatives. It is one of the most important committees, as good communication is crucial to the process.

Review committee: This committee hears any challenges or queries about the rating process or results. Often it includes members of the job evaluation rating committee along with new members, who bring an important, fresh perspective and can ask questions of both the person challenging the job evaluation process and the job evaluation rating committee members.

Hiring an Outside Consultant

Job evaluation takes time, whether you use outside help or do it alone. In both cases — consultants or in-house help — time has value. The organization should prepare for compensation adjustment costs. Remember the consultant costs, and be wary of consultants who promise zero costs.

If you decide to hire a consulting firm to help with your pay equity initiative, consider the firm's expertise and approach. It will be important for you to find someone who knows the pay equity legislation and whose job evaluation approach fits, or can be adapted to fit, your organization.

Be especially careful to find the right match if you decide to use a job evaluation system supplied by the firm rather than to create your own. It is best not to choose a consultant based on reputation, price, or sales pitch until after you have narrowed the competition to those firms that fit with your organization's values, culture and needs.

If you choose not to hire a consultant, one of several people in the organization may require a great deal of learning time to become sufficiently competent in pay equity to do the

evaluation. On the other hand, an outside consultant will not be an expert on the organization's culture, values, informal rules, hierarchies, and politics. The best solution may be to hire a consultant to help guide the pay equity process in collaboration with one or more internal people who guide the content.

In summary, there are several ways to use a consultant's help:

- for guidance only;
- for guidance with some hands-on support;
- for a lot of hands-on support; and
- to do all the “leg work”, such as creating job descriptions or questionnaires.

Choosing a Communications Strategy

Some people say communication can “make or break” a pay equity project. If the process is not properly explained or is presented in a mysterious manner, employees may see it as suspect or unfair, even if it is done correctly. This is why a sound communications strategy is key.

The pay equity process is not an overnight one, and the end result will be more satisfying if it is done thoughtfully and step-by-step, with effective communication, rather than quickly, leaving unanswered questions and frustration in its wake. The need to communicate well about pay equity comes up when instructing employees who are providing job information, when inviting people to participate as committee members, when explaining the process to management and employees at the end of the process, and when providing progress reports, for example.

1. How Much Communication?

In answering this question, remember that there may be many players on the equity stage — a variety of managers, union officials, and employees. Changes in compensation are rarely effected with a mere stroke of the pen! And every player has expectations, which should be based on good information. There are at least three ways to approach the sharing of information:

- a) **Very little communication:** Let employees know that the organization is undertaking a pay equity process, and that it has the organization's support. Once the process is completed, tell employees the results. For example, it might be appropriate to simply issue a statement that the process confirmed that for the most part, jobs are paid fairly, but that some were found to be undervalued. Management should make its commitment to any redress clear.



For example: “Because the organization believes in paying jobs what they are worth, management is pleased to say that jobs found to be undervalued will have their compensation adjusted as of the next pay period. If you have any questions, the person to call is....” Such an option is generally not chosen in unionized work places.

- b) **Moderate communication:** Give some explanation as to why the study is being done, some details about the jobs to be studied, an explanation of the process, and the names of people on the job evaluation rating committee. When the project is complete, tell employees what the organization intends to do about the findings, and explain the review process (how to challenge decisions).
- c) **Extensive communication:** Explain as much as possible about the project and the players: the process, the purpose, the rules, the results.

All change is difficult, and organizational support can be as important to the success of the program as the changes themselves. In the case of pay equity, it is essential to get support from senior level management. If the president appears against the program, the pay equity process will be at a real disadvantage from the beginning. It is important to communicate with, and provide training to, senior managers. Then it is important to get their support so that they can participate positively in the outward communication.

2. Points to Ponder

- Communication is often at the root of many problems within an organization.
- Good communication is crucial to a pay equity program’s success.
- What matters as much as how well a program is done, is how it is perceived to have been done. Perceptions of what’s real have real consequences.
- Communication moves in two directions:
 - a) Outgoing
 - Who (*sender*) says what (*intended message*) in what way (*channel*) to whom (*receiver*) with what result (*perceived meaning*)? (An example of poor outgoing communication: a roadside diner and gas station whose sign reads “Eat here and get gas.”)
 - b) Incoming
 - What do the various stakeholder groups have to offer?
 - How might their various perspectives and insights aid the program?

- How might their views and insights be captured?
 - What type of mechanisms should be created to handle complaints and concerns?
- A communication strategy can be developed according to the following six questions:
- a) **Who** is the communication for, and who is it from?
 - possible recipients: employees, unions, supervisors, management, women, men
 - possible deliverers: the president or senior manager, human resources personnel, managers, union representatives, supervisors, employee's peers, committee members
 - b) **What** information is to be communicated?
 - salary grades, classifications, or jobs to be covered by pay equity
 - rules of the system
 - factors used for evaluations
 - committee members' names and titles
 - process for review if an employee has a concern or question
 - timing for any wage adjustments
 - c) **When** or how often should communication occur?
 - active: regularly, to bring employees up to date on progress
 - reactive: whenever asked about particulars, or when someone requests an information session
 - d) **Where** are the most effective and comfortable places for communication to take place?
 - meeting room, office, union hall, or wherever employees will be comfortable (Employees need to be put at ease, particularly when they are receiving information on an issue that involves change, such as job evaluation and pay equity.)
 - e) **Why** should the organization and union communicate? To:
 - explain the process
 - clarify objectives
 - manage expectations
 - show accessibility
 - build trust and support
 - encourage feedback
 - prevent unnecessary complaints based on lack of understanding
 - legitimate concerns and fears
 - test results
 - f) **How** should information be communicated?
 - in writing (formal): notices, memos, pay cheque inserts, newsletters, and so on
 - verbally (less formal): presentations, individual review sessions

- Pay equity is about change, and all changes cause people to ask:
 - how will this affect me?
 - what will it require of me?
 - what's in it for me?
 - are the benefits worth the costs?

Be prepared to answer questions, and to manage people's expectations. Pay equity is a sensitive issue, and may seem threatening. Male workers feel threatened by the scrutiny of their jobs and pay. Personnel and compensation people may feel this process challenges what they have done in the past. Women may feel threatened by the spotlight and may have to deal with backlash. Managers may feel threatened by the cost and by the implication that they have been unfair. Unions will have to deal with employee questions, expectations and reactions. Committee members may feel threatened by peer pressure. Knowing how to respond to these fears will help the organization achieve a smooth transition to pay equity.

- When designing and implementing a pay equity communications strategy:
 - a) Look at pay equity from the perspective of:
 - senior management
 - union officials
 - first line supervisors
 - female employees
 - male employees
 - middle management
 - various occupations and jobs
 - ii. Consider the needs of the various stakeholder groups and try to anticipate their:
 - concerns
 - particular sensitivities
 - need for information
 - expectations

People need to understand pay equity and their role in it. Communication plans should cover the organization's policy on pay equity and fair compensation, how employees can give feedback, and should address any concerns employees who are not getting pay increases bring forward that may point to resentment.

The Importance of Communication and Training

The communication process is a significant part of the pay equity process, and its success or failure will affect the whole process. Management support is crucial: employees will notice if management never makes clear its support for pay equity. Similarly, union support sets the tone for employee acceptance. Resentment or a backlash against employees whose compensation is being adjusted is one way gender bias can manifest itself.

Employees need to be reassured that no one's compensation will be lowered, and that pay equity is about fairness, not about measuring performance or restructuring the workplace.

Training, or a lack of it, also affects biases, commitment and attitudes about the evaluation process. Employees, managers, and job evaluation rating committee members will all benefit from gender bias sensitivity training, and the pay equity process will be stronger and easier as a result.

Finally, the form and content of any training are part of the communication element; they will likely affect how the various people involved perceive the organization's commitment to the goals of pay equity.

Avoiding Gender Bias in Logistics

One Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal provided guidelines for assessing the gender neutrality of a job comparison system. It started by stating that the purpose of pay equity is to redress the systemic discrimination that is built into existing compensation practices. If the skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions are required in the normal performance of the work, they must be of value to the organization whether or not those requirements have been consciously recognized or previously valued by the employer.¹

According to the Tribunal members, the first question should be What range of work is being performed in the establishment? This question is meant to stimulate new thinking, so that in the pay equity process, people start to examine aspects of work that may have gone unnoticed before.

It is important for an organization to begin by exploring its mission and what is needed to accomplish that mission. The job evaluation system is really a reflection of the organization's own values, and fair compensation depends on clarity about underlying values. If a job evaluation system does not make work visible and allow its elements to be described, in effect the organization is saying the work is worthless. This means each organization must value work in a manner that is free of gender bias.

Four suggestions to help meet the challenge of minimizing gender bias at the logistical stage:

1. Collect documents that refer to, or give clues about, mandates for specific departments, such as job titles, departmental categories, mission statements, and departmental policies. For example, customer service may have a different mandate than marketing or personnel. Job descriptions may also suggest mandates. Set up focus groups to identify the organization's programs and to list the necessary elements of work and the conditions under which the work is performed.

1. Ontario Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal Decision, Ontario Nurses Association versus Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk, 29 May 1991, page 8, paragraph 21.4.

Avoiding Gender Bias in Logistics (continued)

2. Set up a well-designed means for collecting and reviewing this information. Do not be limited to traditional means. Instead, train employees to provide a broad scope of information that describes their work. This training includes sensitizing people to aspects of work that have hitherto been invisible or under-described.
3. Remember to ensure that this information is broad, balanced and complete, describing all the elements of work performed. (Some examples of work that people may need to be reminded of include interpersonal skills and the need to work on tasks simultaneously, with flexibility.)
4. Approach this review in a probing, thorough, and curious way. Re-examine assumptions and vague generalities. Insist on specifics, explanations and examples. Remember that some employees will under-describe what they do. Help them with language that creates images. You will also help by training them to use appropriate terminology and phrases and to use the active rather than the passive voice in job descriptions or questionnaires.

■ EVALUATING JOBS AND AVOIDING GENDER BIAS