



# Tips for Gender Inclusion in Aviation<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

Although in many parts of the world, women and men are co-leading households and are sharing duties as financial heads of families, the most recent census data shows that even in Canada, women still assume the bulk of the household responsibilities... even when they are working full time!<sup>2</sup> This means that while your male AMEs, FAs, pilots and controllers may come to work after a good night's rest, their female counterparts may have been up all night with a new baby and are going home to clean the house and do laundry after their shift. Women also tend to take on more of the elder care responsibilities in Canada than their male colleagues, meaning that they have additional responsibility at home looking after an aging parent.

Interestingly, an increasing number of men are availing themselves of parental leave, and taking time off work to look after children at home and facing the “back to work” challenges that have typically been absent from the male career dialogue.

What are the impacts of these realities in the workplace, and how can the aviation industry leverage the skills and talents of all genders in ways that preserves work life flow and ensures a safe and respectful workplace?

## Tips

- Use inclusive language in company documents. Consider the use of “they”, or “s/he” rather than assuming a male-dominant approach to wording.
- Screen recruits for commitment to the company's diversity program; include scenario-based questions that will uncover strengths and/or problem areas. (Work with diversity experts to develop criteria ahead of time!)
- Hire in groups and consider scheduling same-gender pairings to increase likelihood of emotionally safe transition to non-traditional workplaces (for example one airline recently hired three female ramp attendants, and scheduled them for training and initial shifts together or with other women so that they were never the only female in a group; another airline ensures that male flight attendants and female pilots are paired with same gender senior employees during initial training/line indoc.)
- Search for bias in performance reviews and promotion processes; be prepared to honestly look internally at opportunities for improvement
- Include all genders in advertisements, posters and other external and internal visual images representing different roles in your company or organization.
- Ensure your organization has a well thought out parental leave policy in place, and that the wording of this policy is gender neutral. Check in with employees on leave to get feedback, and consider working with parents of all genders to craft or revise policy.
- Consider revising your office work schedule and crew schedule to allow people to transition back to work (or to balance continuing home and work commitments) in a way that enables flexibility (Lack of flex and part-time work options are often cited by female pilot and ATC applicants as a barrier to the profession!)
- Interview and/or survey women in classically male roles (e.g., pilot, ATC, AME, etc.) and men in traditionally female roles in the industry to find out how gender inclusive your workplace really is. You might be surprised at what you learn! (Be prepared to act on findings.) 

<sup>1</sup> This tip sheet was co-developed by multiple contributors with varying identities. It is part of a suite of resources called “*Thinking about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Aviation*”, developed by Canadian Aviation Pride (CAP) in collaboration with ground and flight crew from a variety of aviation-related industries across Canada. This tip sheet has a companion resource called “*Thinking About Gender in Aviation*”. That resource and additional “*DEI in Aviation*” resources on a wide range of topics can be found at [www.aviationpride.ca](http://www.aviationpride.ca)

<sup>2</sup> MacLeans, June 2017, “[Stop the Presses! Canadian Women Do more Housework.](#)”