



USAID’s Engendering Industries Best Practices Framework for Advancing Gender Equality in Male-Dominated Industries:

3.4 Develop and implement a “buddy system” for new employees as part of the onboarding process

About Your Gender Equality Plan

The following Gender Equality Plan was generated using Engendering Industries' online tool: [The Best Practices Framework for Advancing Gender Equality in Male-Dominated Industries](#). The best practices listed in this plan were identified and included to fill gender equality gaps at your organization. The information included in your plan provides an overview of how to implement best practices, challenges to implementation, and markers of success. More information and resources for advancing gender equality at your company are available at EngenderingIndustries.org.

Description

Establish a quality “buddy system” for new employees with:

- Clear targets, roles, and time frame (best practice is to pair buddy and new employee for a year)
- One person responsible for the selection of buddies, matching process, quality management and evaluation of success

Match employees from different organizational and job backgrounds to enforce cross-departmental learning and allow new hires to get more insight into different aspects of the corporation and business

Match women entering the company with someone from an operational or technical field to reduce barriers, make technical areas more accessible

Encourage buddies to bring their protégés to their own workplace (e.g., job shadowing day) and/or introduce the new employee to their own informal network

Challenges to Implementation

Company may not have sufficient resources to set up the system

Corporate or local culture may not be supportive of pairing women and men

The same employees always volunteer to be a buddy

The process may get stuck due to time constraints faced by the buddy and the protégé, and when not reinforced by the program manager

What Success Looks Like

Well-established system is in place with a good number of buddies from different departments and work areas

New hires gain exposure to different business areas, which helps them to establish professional relations for cross-sectional working

New hires are equipped with a back-up network helping them to address questions and issues they may not want to discuss within their new departments

Retention, productivity, and satisfaction of new hires improves

Resources and Tools

Report/Study: [Implementing a Buddy System in the Workplace](#) (Project Management Institute)

Article: [To Buddy or Not to Buddy?](#) (HR Gazette)