

# EVALUATION REPORT

## Gender Inclusive Leadership Training for Male Supervisors in Skilled Trades

Delivered by the Shift Change Project funded by Women and Gender Equality

**JULY 2021**

This evaluation report has been developed and created in partnership by the YWCA Halifax Shift Change team and Horizons Community Development Associates Inc.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The YWCA Halifax Shift Change project began in 2018 with a question of how to further women’s economic security in the field of skilled trades, funded by Women and Gender Equity Canada (WAGE).

In 2020, the project produced a learning report aggregating data collected through focus groups with 71 male supervisors from over 20 companies. Key themes from this phase of the work indicated that male supervisors were finding the adjustment to including more women challenging. A sense of precariousness in their existing work, fear of repercussion and lack of time to learn and be self-reflective were some of the challenges.

From the focus group work, it was clear that male supervisors needed training and support around inclusion efforts. The Shift Change team then conducted 14 interviews with employers and sector partners to inquire specifically about the need and interest in creating a training for male supervisors. Feedback was positive.

In January and April 2021, two pilot courses were held with a total of 28 male supervisors starting and finishing the course. The course was designed to create a safe space for male supervisors to learn together about gender and differences based on their own lived experience and the lived experience of diverse women in skilled trades. It was a blend of in-person and on-line learning and created based on feedback from male and female tradespeople around productive ways of working with gender and other differences.

In December 2020, the leadership of the YWCA Halifax Shift Change Project began working with *Horizons Community Development Associates Inc.* to plan and implement an evaluation of the course. The evaluation was designed to answer overarching evaluation questions – what outcomes were achieved, what worked well, what were the challenges, what could be improved – and to provide recommendations on future program design and delivery.

### 1.0 Key Finding: The Results of this Course lead to Increased Capacity around Inclusion

The overarching conclusions demonstrated that participants experienced an increase in their awareness of gender inclusion as well as an increase in self-awareness. This, in turn, has led to an increased ability to act and demonstrate actions shown in the Champion Action Plans. Subsequent follow up shows that most fulfilled, if not exceeded, their named actions.



### 2.0 Key Finding: Course Continuation

Participants learned what they hoped from the course with several indicating they learned more than expected. The majority of participants reported their confidence increased by a great extent across all the modules. None of the participants reported “no change” in confidence across any of the modules showing that all participants’ confidence levels consistently increased across all the training modules. The facilitator’s observations indicate that the course design and flow were structured to support the learning objectives and outcomes. The purposeful design of in-person facilitated discussions and exercises as well as offering the course over 6 weeks provided the space and time for participants to reflect and practice the learning.

- 2.1 **Recommendation:** The course should continue to run as designed and facilitated to include more male supervisors in this training and learning journey.

### 3.0 **Key Finding: Facilitator Skillfulness & Supports**

The capability and skillfulness of the facilitator is important to this learning and impact for participants. The facilitator delivers content, facilitates difficult conversations, models how to challenge behaviour and norms that require further work, validates and celebrates participants in their learning, encourages action learning/reflective process and creates accountability in the learning process. It was important to hold space for the facilitator to work through the challenging conversations, to distill them, recover and not bring things that were difficult back into the space with the participants.

- 3.1 **Recommendation:** Creating a good description of the critical and important competencies needed for the facilitator would be helpful for future replication of the course.

- 3.2 **Recommendation:** Those delivering the course should have supports in place for the facilitator as they support participants with difficult content and conversations.

### 4.0 **Key Finding: Three Themes Identified by Participants around Barriers for Women**

Three themes emerged from the participant feedback around their perception of the barriers for women in skilled trades. First was an emphasis on needing a larger population of women in the workplace to encourage change. A major barrier to getting more women into the workplace was a view that an “old guard” near the end of their careers were resisting the change. The second theme was that there is a persistent negative attitude which makes it difficult for women to integrate and become accepted members of the group. The third theme brought up was the perception that the work itself was too physically demanding for many women to effectively perform the job.

- 4.1 **Recommendation:** Continued efforts and investment should be made in preparing, recruiting, retaining and advancing women in skilled trades by partners and employers.

- 4.2 **Recommendation:** Workplace culture change initiatives such as this training should continue to support the inclusion and advancement of women with intersectional identities. Focus on training and workplace culture change should be a priority for employers in their training and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion efforts. Partnering with women in trades agencies and other NGOs on training is a good way to co-develop initiatives and learn together.

- 4.3 **Recommendation:** Attitudinal change and increased awareness about stereotypes around women’s ability to perform must continue. Participants recommended that a solution to this problem would be to continue with trainings such as this one to encourage more accepting attitudes. Further work and analysis on understanding this perspective and why it may continue to persist could help uncover and address this issue. It may relate to the lack of accommodations that workplaces have for women and men who require adjustments to be made to include them safely on worksites. Workplace assessments, accommodations and dialogue with women and men could help inform this issue.

### 5.0 **Key Finding: Allyship**

By the end of the course, most of the participants were able to name many ways to be an ally to women and all could identify at least three ways to be an ally. In the post-survey, participants reported that “Practicing Empathy and Allyship in the workplace” and “How to Balance Power and Privilege in

the Workplace” as the most impactful to leading inclusion efforts with confidence in their everyday work. The barriers expressed included the ‘persistent attitude’ in workplaces which makes it difficult for women to integrate. Participants requested follow up support on strengthening their allyship efforts and indicated an interest in staying connected in order to continue building this capacity.

**5.1 Recommendation:** Create ongoing learning opportunities and allyship networks. Practicing empathy and good allyship requires intentional and supportive opportunities for discussion, asking questions, and practicing ways of interacting that help to provide continuous learning opportunities which support the learning in this training.

## **6.0 Key Finding: Hearing Women’s Experiences and Supported Dialogue**

Most of the participants indicated their appreciation of having women in skilled trades as guest speakers talking about their personal and professional experiences and rated this module as very useful. Just under a third of them reported hearing from women as “eye opening” and liked the real-life stories. In feedback on improving the course, several participants shared they wanted to learn more from women in the trades and connecting with female leaders. Several comments included “To hear from local trades women on what kinds of Ally and support have helped them best - big or small” and “To give the class a better general picture of what women experience in Nova Scotia.”

**6.1 Recommendation:** The experience of safe and structured dialogue, supported by a skillful and experienced facilitator, can be replicated in workplaces and environments where women and men are needed to develop workplace culture change collaboratively. Further research and program offerings in this area are recommended.

**6.2 Recommendation:** Develop good quality, sharable and localized media that employers and supervisors can use to support raising awareness and creating a more welcoming workplace. The media should include diverse perspectives and reflect the many identities of skilled trades workers. It may help if media is accompanied by good, reflection questions that can be used to create conversation and dialogue amongst the group.

## **7.0 Key Finding: Homework and Time Investment**

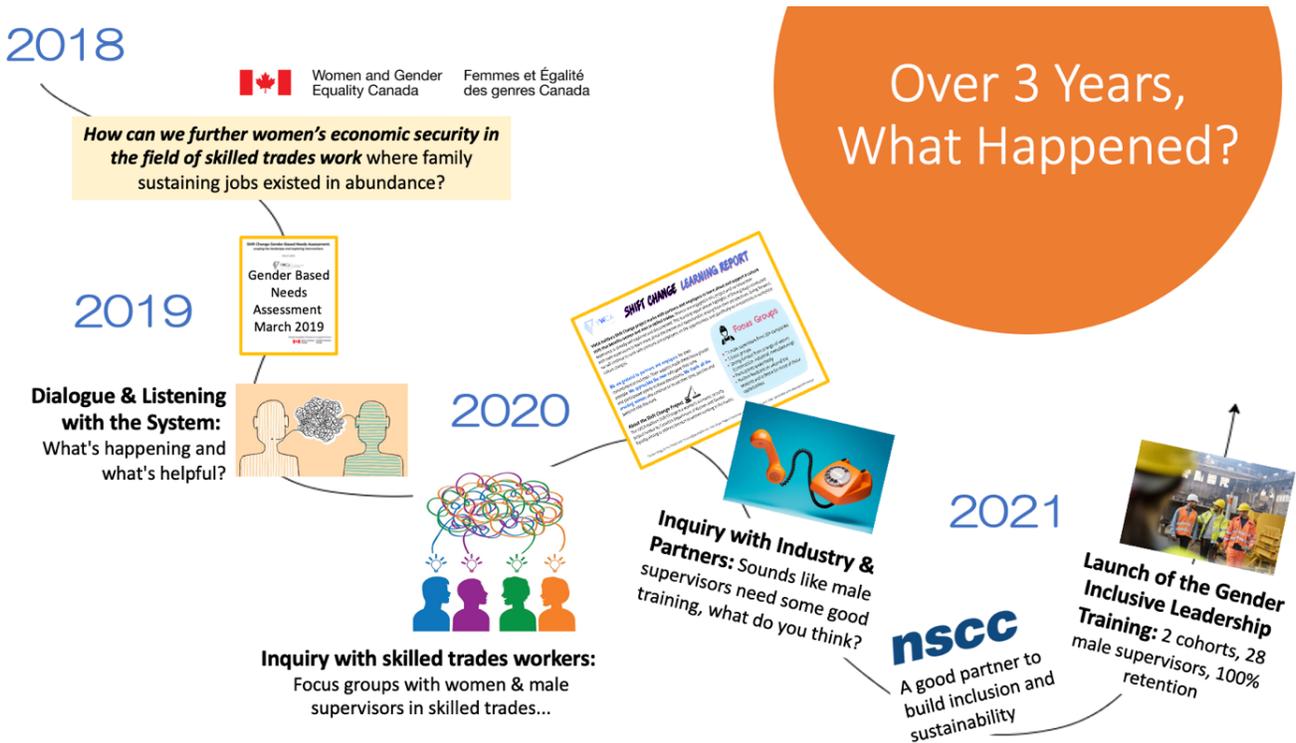
The amount of homework was not consistent between modules and some participants struggled with the amount of time needed to do homework and action learning activities.

**7.1 Recommendation:** While the program requires a time commitment that may feel onerous, shortening the program is not recommended. Instead, the facilitator should be more explicit about module-by-module time commitment and participants should be supported to understand expectations related to the program and to problem solve competing priorities.

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

YWCA Halifax has been engaged in employment programs for over 150 years with women, many of whom are in the experience of poverty. The YWCA Halifax is part of a national feminist movement and has joined the Nova Scotian women's movement in skilled trades to help support women to access secure jobs with family sustaining wages and increasing the number of women working and advancing in their careers in this sector.

A visual overview of our three-year project can be seen below:



In 2019, the Shift Change project produced a gender-based needs assessment indicating that while there were several partners working directly with women in skilled trades, including Women Unlimited and the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, there was limited engagement of male supervisors around the inclusion of women in the sector even though men occupy most leadership positions in skilled trades companies.

In 2020, the Shift Change project produced a learning report aggregating data collected through focus groups with 71 male supervisors from over 20 companies. Focus group findings indicated that there was limited engagement of male supervisors around the inclusion of women in the sector even though men occupy most leadership positions in skilled trades companies.

Male supervisors also reported several themes that caused barriers to building greater inclusion of women in skilled trades. The key themes from this phase of the work indicated that male supervisors were finding the adjustment to including more women challenging. A sense of precariousness in their existing work, fear of repercussion and lack of time to learn and be self-reflective were some of the challenges.

From the focus group work, it was clear that male supervisors needed training and support around inclusion efforts. In the fall of 2020, the Shift Change team conducted 14 interviews with employers and sector partners to share the learning report and inquire specifically about the need and interest in creating a training for male

supervisors. Feedback was positive and the team proceeded to work with a consultant and the NSCC to develop and review curriculum as well as work with employers and partners to recruit participants.

In January and April 2021, two pilot courses were held with a total of 28 male supervisors starting and finishing the course. The timeline below provides a snapshot of the process:



## COURSE OVERVIEW

### Course Description

The Gender Inclusive Leadership training course for male supervisors in the skilled trades offered leadership skills development and social emotional learning, with specific focus on the inclusion of women in skilled trades. Learning around intersectionality was included in an accessible way and referred to as ‘differences’.

The course was designed to create a safe space for male supervisors to learn together about gender and differences based on their own lived experience and the lived experience of diverse women in skilled trades. It was also meant to prepare male supervisors in the trades with the skills and knowledge to support inclusive and safe workplaces. It was offered as a blend of in-person and on-line learning. The course was created based on feedback from male and female tradespeople around productive ways of working with gender and other differences.

The course objectives were:

- To motivate men to lead change that will create a welcoming and inclusive workplace.
- To prepare and provide skills that will enable men to act and respond to workplace situations associated with gender and difference.
- To connect men to a peer network where they can continue to learn and support each other to make changes in the workplace for inclusivity and increasing diversity.

**Training methodology and approach:** We employed a values-based approach centered on principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We used adult education methodologies which include learning through practice.

**Criteria for assessment and evaluation:** Participants were assessed and coached throughout this process. The facilitator identified areas of strength and ability while highlighting skills that may require work or refinement. Completion of the course was dependent on active participation in all six modules of the course and the completion of homework assignments. Participants who did not complete the courses or assignments were not awarded with a certificate.

**Homework assignments:** Homework was assigned after each module. Participants were expected to complete the homework prior to the class the following week. They received an email following each class detailing the homework along with reflection and module evaluation questions they were expected to complete. Homework assignments were also detailed in the participant manual.

## Curriculum Review

Prior to offering the training course, the Shift Change team collaborated with curriculum specialists from NSCC and women in skilled trades from diverse identities to ensure that the curriculum reflected women in skilled trades voices and needs. Several NSCC staff with Black and Indigenous lived experience were instrumental in supporting the inclusion of an intersectional lens.

Two online meetings as well as several individual interviews were conducted to inform the design, content, and activities for the course. The course facilitator participated in these sessions to ensure both the content and delivery needs were met and aligned with the feedback.

*See Appendix A for Curriculum Review Process.*

## What was delivered?

The full course was delivered twice, once beginning on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and again on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Course content was delivered over six weeks for a total of 30 hours. Each week participants gathered in-person or virtually for a 3-hour session. The first course delivery had all sessions in-person with a one week gap due to Covid-19 restrictions. The second course delivery had the first two modules in-person, which established relationships and trust, and the final four modules were delivered online due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Participants completed an additional 12 hours of homework and action learning assignments between sessions. No changes were made to the course delivery from the original course design between group one and group two. The same modules were delivered to both groups:

- Module 1: Setting the stage – Understanding gender in the workplace
- Module 2: Awareness of gender
- Module 3: Power and gender
- Module 4: Communication & Gender-based violence in the workplace
- Module 5: Conflict resolution
- Module 6: Leadership & fostering welcoming and inclusive worksites

Project outputs include a participant training manual with action assignments, a facilitation guide, and content power point presentations.

## Who participated?

### Course Participants

28 male supervisors volunteered to participate in the course. These participants represented 12 industry employers (i.e., Industrial/Manufacturing, Construction, and Motive Power). All the participants supervised, managed or directed operations for their employers. Participants' ages were evenly distributed across 4 decades ranging from 29 to 62 years-old (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Participant Ages (n=28)**

Age	#	%
25 - 34	6	21.4
35 - 44	9	32.1
45 - 54	7	25
55 - 64	3	10.7
No response	3	10.7
Total	28	100

Prior to starting the course participants were asked in a pre-survey about previous trainings, what they hoped to learn from this course, and experiences they have had with women in their workplace.

In response to the question "Have you ever taken any past training on women in workforce?", eighteen participants said this was their first training on including women in the workforce while six had received some training in the past. The six participants who received previous training said it was useful.

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

In December 2020, the leadership of the YWCA Halifax Shift Change Project began working with *Horizons Community Development Associates Inc.* to plan and implement an evaluation of the course.

### Development of the Evaluation

The process of developing the evaluation entailed:

- Reviewing relevant background documents;
- Developing the program logic model;
- Preparing a draft evaluation framework including a mixture of data collection methods (i.e., surveys, observations, focus groups and interviews);
- Circulating drafts to the evaluation work group for feedback;
- Reviewing of the draft materials;
- Refining the evaluation framework, based on feedback; and
- Developed relevant tools for data collection.

*See Appendix B for the Shift Change Logic Model.*

## Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation used a mixture of data collection methods, described below:

1. Focus Groups and Interviews;
2. Web Surveys; and
3. Observation (included as ‘facilitator feedback’ in Course Design and Delivery sections).

Table 2 below summarizes some of the evaluation methods and data sources. Observations were conducted in-person and interviews were conducted by phone.

**Table 2. Summary of evaluation methods and data sources**

Data Source	Data Collection Method			
	Web Surveys	Observation	Interviews	Focus Groups
Course Participants (male supervisors)	✓		✓	✓
Course Delivery		✓		
Course Instructor			✓	
Employers and Partners			✓	

### *Focus Groups and Interviews*

Eight focus groups were held between June 2019 – January 2020 with women in trades (n=3) and male supervisors (n=5) to learn more about their experiences. This information was used along with the project’s Gender Based Needs Assessment (March 2019) to inform next steps for project work. In the male supervisor group, we heard from 71 male supervisors from more than 20 companies from a range of sectors, including construction, industrial and manufacturing.

Between July and October 2020, 14 interviews were conducted with employers (n=11) and sector partners who represent women (n=3) to capture rich qualitative information that informed the design and delivery of the course.

Interviews with employers also provided an opportunity to gauge commitment from employers on supporting participation from their male supervisors. The course participants were recruited from the employers involved in the early planning for this course.

Interviews were conducted after each module and post course with the course facilitator, Stephen Law, to determine what went well, what were the challenges, and what changes, if any, were made as the course was delivered.

*See Appendix C for the Shift Change Learning Report relating to focus group information and Appendix D for details about Employer and Partner Synthesis.*

## Web Surveys

The purpose of conducting the web-based surveys was to gather input and feedback from the course participants. Seven web surveys were conducted (i.e., pre-course (n=1), one at the end of each module (n=5), and post-course (n=1)). The pre-course survey asked participants about their learning styles, personal learning goals, and knowledge of and comfort level with the course topics. The five post-module surveys addressed the module learning objectives and course delivery. The post-course survey asked participants about knowledge, confidence, and skills they had gained throughout the course and what they valued or did not value about the course as a whole.

The number of responses to each of the 7 surveys varied but each had a very high response rate (i.e., 75 % to 96.4 %). Of the 28 male supervisors who participated in the course, at least 23 to 27 participants completed each of the 7 surveys and one participant completed no surveys.

See Appendix E for the web survey questions.

**Table 3. Number and Percentage of Participants who Responded to each of the Surveys**

Surveys	Number of Survey Respondents	Percentage of Course Participants
Pre-course survey	25/28	89.3 %
Module 1	27/28	96.4 %
Module 2	27/28	96.4 %
Module 3	26/28	92.9 %
Module 4	25/28	89.3 %
Module 5	25/28	89.3 %
Post-course survey	23/28	75 %

## Methodological Limitations

The following limitations to this evaluation must be considered when reviewing the results:

*Limitation #1: COVID-19 Pandemic.* The course and evaluation were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Evaluation activities that had originally been planned to take place in person were shifted to an online platform or using the telephone to reach particular data sources.

*Limitation #2:* Engaging participants in the evaluation was a challenge, particularly when their usual work routines have been impacted by a pandemic. As identified above, evaluation activities shifted to an online platform where possible. Taking time to reach out individually also contributed to reaching as many participants as possible.

*Limitation #3: Survey Methods*

The survey responses were voluntary, therefore conclusions about the value of the program are based on uncorroborated self-report. Interviews were also conducted to corroborate, refute, or probe survey findings; however, biases exist, and responses may have been either overly negative or overly positive. Regardless, the data is not generalizable beyond the sample.

## EVALUATION FINDINGS

The evaluation was designed to answer the following overarching evaluation questions, determine what outcomes were achieved, and to provide recommendations on key findings and learning.

### Course Learning Outcomes:

- Increased understanding of enablers/barriers experienced by women in skilled trades.
- Increased knowledge, confidence, and skills in working with gender and difference.
- Increased positive attitudes towards working with gender and difference.
- Increased actions by men who identify as champions and allies for women in skilled trades.
- Increased ability to act and respond to workplace situations associated with gender and difference.
- Increased connection to a peer network obtained through the course.

### Course design and delivery:

- What was designed and delivered? (Please note: Detailed module by module results are included in a supplementary report.)
- What worked well, what were the challenges, and how could this training be improved?

## Training Outcomes

As part of the evaluation, a logic model and evaluation framework were created to identify key immediate outcomes to measure impact for participants through their participation in the course. We ask the following questions as we look for evidence of the change experienced as a result of this course:

- What outcomes were achieved?
- What changes are needed to make it more effective?

### *Outcome 1: Increased understanding of enablers/barriers experienced by women in skilled trades workers.*

This outcome examines the enablers and barriers experience by women in skilled trades separately. Enablers include three topic areas that emerged; welcoming and inclusive worksites, allyship and the supports needed to include women in the workplace. Barriers identified several key themes such as the need to bring in more women, persistent attitudes that prevent inclusion and the perception of women's physical inability to do work.

#### Enablers of Inclusion for Women in Skilled Trades

- \* **Welcoming and Inclusive worksites.** When asked to name three things that could be done at a worksite to make it more welcoming and inclusive, most participants indicated that changes to the worksites' physical plans would achieve this. Almost half felt that inclusive signage could have an impact but there was understanding that it takes many things to create welcoming and inclusive worksites.
- \* **Allyship.** Participants were asked to list three ways they could be an ally to women in the workplace as part of their reflection work after this module. All the men were able to name ways they could be an ally to women and most of them could name at least three ways to be an ally.

The list below provides a summary of the various ways men named they could be an ally:

- Practice allyship (support, encourage, speak up)
- Respect for women (listening)
- Workplace/Individual communication and conversation
- Zero tolerance and workplace safety
- Community resources for women
- Mentorship
- Express emotion and vulnerability
- Education
- Support women’s leadership

*“Open conversation at the ground level, it can be a difficult conversation to have, but attempting to make it a safe space for people to discuss this matter is the first step to improving the environment.”*

\* **Supports needed to include women in the workplace.** In the post-survey data, participants emphasized the importance of hiring more women in the workplace and highlighted how having representation will allow women to advocate for themselves. After receiving the training a few participants thought it would be beneficial to have the HR department and the executives of the company also involved in the same training sessions to solidify these concepts as company-wide plan and policy. Although many ideas on improvements were shared among the majority of participants, a few felt as though their employers were already implementing the supports these sessions advocated for.

### Barriers to Inclusion for Women in Skilled Trades

In the pre-survey the participants outlined a number of barriers and challenges that they perceived women faced in their workplaces. The most prominent answer related to the culture and attitudes of men in their field. Participants named specific examples such as prejudice against women, sexual harassment, and a general lack of acceptance. Three participants felt that the job itself was physically difficult for many women to do and therefore was a deterrence and barrier for many women entering the field. Two participants cited that their workspaces had no separate changing/bathroom facilities and one participant felt that there were no barriers or challenges at all for women entering their workplace.

In the post survey many of the same barriers were restated with more depth and frequency.

From the interviews with women, most participants indicated an awareness of the inequity women face in the workplace. Several men indicated that the interviews were ‘eye opening’. The homework activity in Module 1 (Interviewing a Women) helped the men practice effective listening and empathy skills.

*“It was eye opening, some of the things we talked about I would not think about or realize happens.”*

Feedback from participants provide some explanation of the learning more specifically: “It was interesting to hear her perspective on the shop environment and the way she approaches her job” and “That there is still a lot of bigotry and chauvinistic views”.

When asked about the biggest learning takeaway from the women in trades guest speaker visit, most of the participants indicated they had insight into the challenges women face and several more identified inequity for women. Almost all participants commented on a ‘takeaway’ indicating their recognition of women’s experience.

Comments included “How many simple challenges women face, and how easy some of those I can help”, “Just the amount of shocking uncalled for experience they have no wonder women quite so quickly. And to hear from how they feel about what men should do in the workplace”, “How much the odds are stacked against the women in the workplaces” and “How unwelcome women are made to feel on some jobsites”.

*“Woman just want to be treated the same and be heard and validated.”*

In the post survey, when asked about the top three barriers for women working in the workplace, the group identified three core themes. First was an emphasis on needing a larger population of women in the workplace to encourage change. A major barrier to getting more women into the workplace was a view that an “old guard” near the end of their carriers were resisting the change. The second theme was that there is a persistent attitude which makes it difficult for women to integrate and become accepted members of the group. The most prominent answer related to the culture and attitudes of men in their field. Participants named specific examples such as prejudice against women, sexual harassment, and a general lack of acceptance.” A solution brought up by the group to this problem is to continue with trainings such as this one to encourage more accepting attitudes. The third theme brought up was that the work itself was too physically demanding for most women to affectively perform the job.

*“How much extra work they have to put in to be recognized.”*

### *Outcome 2: Increased knowledge, confidence, and skills in working with gender and difference.*

The following outcome areas are grouped into the three areas to report on an increase in knowledge, confidence, and skills as a result of the course.

#### Increased Knowledge

When asked how gender impacts or affects their workplace, the majority of participants could identify factors such as the lack of fairness between genders, the industry being male dominated and sexism in the workplace. A minority didn’t identify impacts with a couple indicating that they do not have women in their workplace. Most of the participants indicated an understanding of privilege and half recognized male and white privilege.

Almost all participants were able to identify attitudes, behaviours, context (ABCs) and fears that both men and women experience in their respective workplaces.

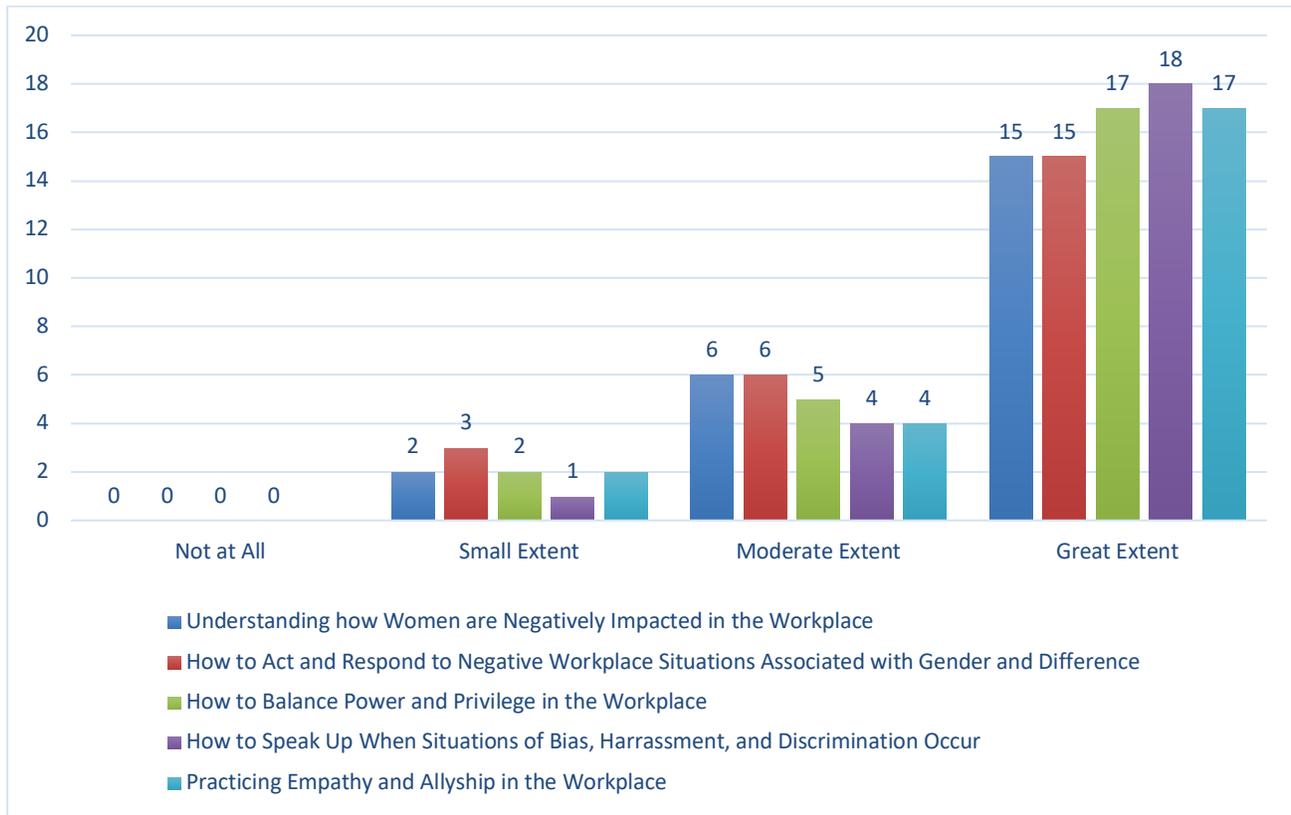
*“I was happy to hear how well women can do in trades with good role models but it was shocking how much non work relate hard ships they had to deal with”*

#### Increased Confidence

In the post-survey, on the whole, the participants reported an overall increase in confidence when using what they learned from the modules in their workplaces. The most impactful areas where participants experienced the greatest change in were “Practicing Empathy and Allyship in the workplace” and “How to Balance Power and Privilege in the Workplace”.

The table below indicates change in level of confidence to apply learning in their everyday work.

**Table 4. Change in level of confidence to apply learning in everyday work (n=23)**



### Increased Skills

The following information highlights three main categories of skill development; effective listening skills, communication and conflict resolution skills, and skills needed to foster gender inclusive worksites.

#### Effective Listening Skills

When asked what they liked best about module 2 (Awareness of Gender), the majority of participants mentioned having the women in skilled trades guest speakers. Participants comments were similar and

*“Being more engaged in conversation. Speaking up in situations I may have just walked away from if I was uncomfortable. I feel like I am much more prepared to have an uncomfortable conversation with others to help promote a positive workplace culture.”*

included: “The ability to be able to hear from women who are working directly in trades, and their experiences” and “Having the Women in the room and open discussion but still keeping focused on gender”.

Participants indicated they liked hearing from women in skilled trades experiences with many of them indicating this was eye opening. “It was eye opening to hear some of the ways that they have been treated throughout their careers. I personally have not seen these take place in any of my

workplaces, but it makes you realize that it clearly does exist, and to be able to watch out for some warning signs from employees”.

## Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills

When asked about ways they could become more than a bystander and use communication and conflict resolution skills related to responding to gender-based violence in the workplace, about half of the men named the need to speak up and act and nearly half shared that conversation and increased awareness were part of the solution. Participants named other ways to support inclusion such as to promote positive workplace culture, be a leader by making their position know, to not be silent and notice the signs of gender-based violence as well as supporting female coworkers.

Participants were asked to identify practical and achievable actions to address attitudes, behaviours, context (ABCs) and fears related to gender conflict in the workplace. Most of the participants were able to identify practical and achievable actions. Half of the participants identified actions related to communication and increasing awareness on their teams while about a third indicated that education, training, or orientation could help. Allyship and being proactive also came up in several comments.

## Skills needed to Foster Gender Inclusive Worksites

All of the participants who completed the post survey indicated they gained the skills needed to foster gender inclusive worksite. Most felt confident they had gained these skills to a great extent (15 out of 23).

### *Outcome 3: Increased positive attitudes towards working with gender and difference.*

Going into the course many participants believed there were few or no problems for women in the trades, they were ambivalent or at least reluctant to acknowledge the issues, and they did not see themselves as contributing to these problems. Many underestimated the depth and breadth of the issues and impact on women.

By the end of course, the participants understood more about themselves, that positive attitudes underpin respectful actions which contribute to healthier and more inclusive, productive workplaces. Most comments about the course content included “eye-opening” or “it really opened my eyes”.

*“If they are not part of the problem, they won't know there is one, the knowledge I learn showed me I can help with this issues that I didn't even think about before.”*

### *Outcome 4: Increased ability to act and respond to workplace situations associated with gender and difference.*

When given a scenario about being a bystander in the workplace, we were able to rate the participant's responses to understand their ability to communicate and respond to workplace situations associated with gender and difference.

Progress towards the outcome indicates that when given a scenario participants can recognize there's a problem, acknowledge that it's wrong, respond to the situation and take action.

The first scenario involved someone sharing photographs on a phone and discussing a dating situation in the workplace. All participants indicated they would acknowledge the behaviour and respond to the situation with a few participants indicating there would be a consequence.

In a second scenario relating to workplace behaviour between a male and female worker, we found that all would acknowledge and respond to the situation. The majority of participants indicated they would take action with several specifying a specific consequence such as a formal responses either involving human resources, doing an investigation, or writing up a complaint.

*“Once you allow the conversation to start objectifying women you are starting to open the door to all kinds of actions and attitudes. be respectable at all times regardless of who is in the room”*

When responding to the post course survey, most of the participants reported their confidence level responding to negative workplace situations involving women had gone up since taking the training. Five participants reported their confidence had gone up moderately while the majority of 6 participants reported their confidence level had risen greatly.

### **Outcome 5: Increased actions by men who identify as champions and allies for women in skilled trades.**

When asked in the pre-survey if there was anything that would need to change in their workplaces so that they would be more inclusive of women, most of the participants felt that enough was already being done or that in fact nothing needed to change to make them more inclusive.

The post-survey showed a dramatic change as when asked a similar question in the post-survey the participants suggested changes such as the importance of hiring more women in the workplace and highlighted how having representation will allow them to advocate for themselves. After receiving the training one participant thought it would be beneficial to have the HR department and the executives of the company also involved in the same training sessions to solidify these concepts as company-wide policy. Although many ideas on improvements were shared among the majority of participants, a few still felt as though their employers were already implementing the supports these sessions advocated for.

*“It was probably one of the most effective courses I have been on. Most likely because I reflected on myself more than anything. The way it was delivered was good and effective as I felt it was designed to be personal”*

### **Ability to Lead Inclusion**

All but one participant reported that their ability to lead inclusion efforts had changed. Ten of the participants reported a moderate change while 12 reported a change in leadership ability to a great extent.

### **Champion Action Plan Summary**

All participants except for one filled out a gender and diversity workplace champion pledge as well as created a workplace Champion Action Plan. The action plan included describing two actions and providing an estimated date of completion as well as signing and dating the plan.

At the end of the course, participants named two actions, along with timelines, they would implement in their respective workplaces. The chart below summarizes the actions by participants.

<b>CHAMPION ACTION PLAN SUMMARY</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Action 2</b>
1	Develop a binder of weekly discussions that can be added to weekly meetings.	Have regular check-ins with women and those of minorities to ensure they are receiving the support they need.
2	During annual forum meeting, have a presentation that will summarize the course and what we want to teach and spread to all sites.	Toolbox talks held weekly. A talk each week about each module (1 module per week).
3	Foster an environment where it is okay for men to discuss the issues around having women on site. I want the men to be able to speak freely without fear of being judged.	Talk to them men individually, build relationships, in an effort to break down barriers.
4	Toolbox talks every few weeks with statistics of women in the workplace hopefully some of the videos we have used in this course for the employees to view.	Changing wording in our training documents and company manual/website to more gender neutral/inclusive.
5	Start conversation at our next toolbox meeting	Contacting a women's group and inquire about job opportunities available for women (mentorship)
6	Direct communication, focus on facts of my context for example from a safety point of view have you done this task before. Do you know what you are doing?	Including one of the girls I work with, on use of a machine not everyone can use, if all works out hopefully this will show others gender doesn't matter.
7	Include information in this course in the member orientation that I teach to get the conversation started on inclusive workplaces.	Promote this course to others such as our members who are supervisors as well as contractors.
8	I plan to pay more attention to interaction of men and women and address these issues when they arise. I plan to be an ally of action and not a bystander.	Have open conversations with our site teams on the perspectives that have been brought up in the program.
9	Speak up-be an ally. Make sure women are being heard and validated (on site and in meetings).	Have toolbox talks on gender in the workplace/open communication during orientation and on site to make women feel comfortable and accepted on site.
10	Ensure equality in the workplace	Equal training and work regardless of race or gender
11	Commit to implementing a regular weekly/monthly meeting/get together of staff to educate on what I have learned and how we will proceed to change how we each treat one another, and address issues hands on in the workplace	N/A

<b>CHAMPION ACTION PLAN SUMMARY</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Action 2</b>
12	Sit/talk one-on-one or together about level 4 training. Use the ABC + FEARS to discover/overcome resistance. Completing the training at first opportunity.	Sit/talk one-on-one or together about conflict to help support change.
13	Keep the conversation going on gender in the workplace, could use it as a way to push change for underprivileged trades people.	Bringing the topic up in the toolbox talks and training day. Watch and check-ins for women. Help them to make their own true paths.
14	Develop and distribute a toolbox talk to be done periodically and to incorporate this in all departments as a part of our safety program.	Send more managers on this course in order to enlighten our leadership team.
15	Gender inclusive poster board.	Implement toolbox talks on gender.
16	Create a "Talk to me" program.	Write a toolbox talk and include in it the weekly rotation. Create a drive team to keep the ball rolling.
17	To help form a group to bring awareness of gender inclusiveness.	Willing to be a male support figure for women to go to with issues/concerns.
18	Review and revise the hiring process. Exclude any biases (internal PRD).	Include Shift change content in weekly team meetings. Content: videos, current topics, idea etc.
19	Work with my workplace on how to move forward, speak out more often if I see/hear something.	Read more on gender and workplace to further understand, as well as discuss with female co-workers.
20	Support equality, respect, and dignity among all genders in my workplace.	Encourage and support opportunities for women to contribute and be valued.
21	Joining a support group at the shipyard to start in proving our ways on support all genders in the workplace.	Moving more discussions with my own team of women at my workplace to see if there are things, I can help them with now. Also building trust with them so they can come to me.
22	Develop a summary presentation to deliver to my work group on the topic.	Talk and implement change to the HR and diversity inclusion team to determine how to attract more women into trades specific to my company.
23	Incorporate gender leadership topics into our safety program in the form of regular toolbox talks.	Be an ally and lead by example with respect to behaviors and speech around minority groups.
24	Get involved with the implementation of the diversity and respectful workplace policy.	Create presentation to our group to explain the outcomes and the purpose of the course.
25	I will share what I have learned in this course and educate others on gender inclusive leadership. Be a public figure.	Actively support women in the workplace by improving communication, encouraging women to progress in their careers & highlight their accomplishments.

CHAMPION ACTION PLAN SUMMARY		
#	Action 1	Action 2
26	Promote a more inclusive and respectable work culture on site	Discuss with management what we can do to better support female workers. It has to be effective.
27	Management to support management around Diversity and Inclusion	To support the training of Depot staff around gender inclusion.

**Follow up on Champion Action Plans**

In a series of calls with participants, the facilitator was able to speak with participants and reported:

- Those spoken with were able to identify the actions they are taking, most of them having fulfilled the commitments they made on their initial plan
- They were interested in talking and sharing their feedback
- Some reported hiring women into positions since the course
- Several reported have discussions with other men and sharing their experiences in their workplace environments
- One of the men built a bathroom for women

*Outcome 6: Increased connection to a peer network obtained through the course.*

Participants reported valuing coming together as a group in the course and several individuals identified a desire for further training. Participants stated that more conversation, education, and networking was needed to increase awareness and support. Participants also noted that a solid action plan and structured support system was needed to include women in the workplace. Participants shared that the equity training needed to be mandatory for supervisors and occur more often. Taken altogether, participants indicated that they would like to keep in contact to continue building capacity to include women in the trades.

**KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Training Outcomes**

**1.0 Key Finding: The Results of this Course lead to Increased Capacity around Inclusion**

The overarching conclusions demonstrated that participants experienced an increase in their awareness of gender inclusion as well as an increase in self-awareness. This, in turn, has led to an increased ability to act and demonstrate actions shown in the Champion Action Plans. Subsequent follow up shows that most fulfilled, if not exceeded, their named actions.



**2.0 Key Finding: Course Continuation**

Participants learned what they hoped from the course with several indicating they learned more than expected. The majority of participants reported their confidence increased by a great extent across all the modules. None of the participants reported “no change” in confidence across any of the modules showing that all participants’ confidence levels consistently increased across all the training modules. The facilitator’s observations indicate that the course design and flow were structured to support the

learning objectives and outcomes. The purposeful design of in-person facilitated discussions and exercises as well as offering the course over 6 weeks provided the space and time for participants to reflect and practice the learning.

- 2.1 **Recommendation:** The course should continue to run as designed and facilitated to include more male supervisors in this training and learning journey.

### 3.0 **Key Finding: Facilitator Skillfulness & Supports**

The capability and skillfulness of the facilitator is important to this learning and impact for participants. The facilitator delivers content, facilitates difficult conversations, models how to challenge behaviour and norms that require further work, validates and celebrates participants in their learning, encourages action learning/reflective process and creates accountability in the learning process. It was important to hold space for the facilitator to work through the challenging conversations, to distill them, recover and not bring things that were difficult back into the space with the participants.

- 3.1 **Recommendation:** Creating a good description of the critical and important competencies needed for the facilitator would be helpful for future replication of the course.
- 3.2 **Recommendation:** Those delivering the course should have supports in place for the facilitator as they support participants with difficult content and conversations.

### 4.0 **Key Finding: Three Themes Identified by Participants around Barriers for Women**

Three themes emerged from the participant feedback around their perception of the barriers for women in skilled trades. First was an emphasis on needing a larger population of women in the workplace to encourage change. A major barrier to getting more women into the workplace was a view that an “old guard” near the end of their careers were resisting the change. The second theme was that there is a persistent negative attitude which makes it difficult for women to integrate and become accepted members of the group. The third theme brought up was the perception that the work itself was too physically demanding for many women to effectively perform the job.

- 4.1 **Recommendation:** Continued efforts and investment should be made in preparing, recruiting, retaining and advancing women in skilled trades by partners and employers.
- 4.2 **Recommendation:** Workplace culture change initiatives such as this training should continue to support the inclusion and advancement of women with intersectional identities. Focus on training and workplace culture change should be a priority for employers in their training and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion efforts. Partnering with women in trades agencies and other NGOs on training is a good way to co-develop initiatives and learn together.
- 4.3 **Recommendation:** Attitudinal change and increased awareness about stereotypes around women’s ability to perform must continue. Participants recommended that a solution to this problem would be to continue with trainings such as this one to encourage more accepting attitudes. Further work and analysis on understanding this perspective and why it may continue to persist could help uncover and address this issue. It may relate to the lack of accommodations that workplaces have for women and men who require adjustments to be made to include them safely on worksites. Workplace assessments, accommodations and dialogue with women and men could help inform this issue.

## 5.0 Key Finding: Allyship

By the end of the course, most of the participants were able to name many ways to be an ally to women and all could identify at least three ways to be an ally. In the post-survey, participants reported that “Practicing Empathy and Allyship in the workplace” and “How to Balance Power and Privilege in the Workplace” as the most impactful to leading inclusion efforts with confidence in their everyday work. The barriers expressed included the ‘persistent attitude’ in workplaces which makes it difficult for women to integrate. Participants requested follow up support on strengthening their allyship efforts and indicated an interest in staying connected in order to continue building this capacity.

- 5.1 Recommendation:** Create ongoing learning opportunities and allyship networks. Practicing empathy and good allyship requires intentional and supportive opportunities for discussion, asking questions, and practicing ways of interacting that help to provide continuous learning opportunities which support the learning in this training.

## Course Design and Delivery

A process evaluation was conducted to provide detailed module by module assessment. This was created to provide the NSCC with a final curriculum review to support the transition process to sustain the course. As noted above, a supplemental report contains this information in further detail. For this evaluation, we have selected the most relevant data to respond to the evaluation process questions:

- What worked well, what were the challenges and how could this training be improved?

### *What worked well?*

In the pre-survey, when asked what participants hoped to learn in the course, they named a variety of things and in the post-survey, most participants indicated they learned what they hoped from the course with several indicating they learned more than expected.

*“Being an Ally in the workplace seems to be the best way to help change the trades for women and can be done right away.”*

When asked what participants liked best about the modules, they indicated:

For module one, Setting the stage – Understanding gender in the workplace, course participants appreciated the group discussion opportunities and the openness of the discussions as they prefer to learn from real interactions than written materials, and it is more impactful. Participants indicated they liked the instructor’s ability to create a safe

environment for hard discussions as well as the practical application of the module such as the learning assignments and homework.

In module two, Awareness of Gender, most participants appreciated having women in skilled trades as guest speakers talking about their personal and professional experiences because it helped to illustrate some of the issues and challenges encountered by women.

Participant comments were similar and included: “The ability to be able to hear from women who are working directly in trades, and their experiences” and “Having the women in the room and open

*“It provided different perspectives and the realization that we are all in the same boat with this. We all need help with understanding best practices and policies when it comes to gender and the workplace”.*

discussion but still keeping focused on gender”. Most found the module eye opening and liked the real-life stories.

For module three, Power and Gender, participants indicated that gaining a better understanding of what

*“It was nice to hear from woman in the workforce to know what they would like and expect. The videos were up to date and eye opening on breaking tendencies to stereotype and being biased.”*

privilege and social power means, the good discussion and increased awareness of equity, and the video on being a bystander were things they liked best. A few more named the activities, gaining insight into themselves, and good information. “How these elements differ from gender and race and also gives you insight as to how you are viewed” and “Thinking about power and privilege in regard to personal context”.

A third of the participants indicated the materials and activities (e.g., examples of privilege, more than/less than activity, equality and equity, Power Wheel); examples illustrated what would be obvious to a minority but not obvious to those in the

majority. It also gave them insight into privilege, allyship, and a different perspective.

*“One quote that stood out for me that actually can sum up this entire module was “it’s not the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends”*

Module four, Communication and Gender-based Violence in the Workplace, half of the participants liked the videos, and several named the video of Jackson Katz: Violence against women - it's a men's issue. A third of the participants enjoyed the discussion, in particular the breakout groups. “All the material was great. I really like putting it in perspective with my mother, wife or daughters”, “Jackson Katz - use my old white guy power”, and “Breaking down into groups and sharing our ideas and views on various topics we discussed”. A third of participants found the session thought provoking, naming seeing women as equal.

For module five, Conflict Resolution, most participants identified good discussion, interaction, and information with a few indicating the session was eye opening. “The group discussions and personal stories that were

*“The correlation between domestic violence and workplace performance was an eye opener for sure.”*

shared showed that many of us, though in different industries, face the same kinds of challenges”. Most participants identified increased awareness and insight into conflict styles and awareness and a couple identified that this was new information. “It helps to find the deep-rooted reason behind the conflict between genders” and “That almost 82 percent of those people affected, say it has an impact on job performance.”

Specific feedback on module six about what worked well was not collected as the module was summative and reflective, focussed on key learning and next steps for action planning.

### **Facilitator feedback on what worked well**

Starting the course with the homework of talking to a woman in their life was a good idea because it brought immediacy, depth, and relevance to the program. All the women had something to say about their experiences about working with men and there was a depth of sharing that occurred. Some of the men also talked to more than one woman because they found it so helpful and went above and beyond the action learning assignment requirements.

The purposeful design of offering this course over 6 weeks, even with some negative feedback about the amount of time from some of the men, provided the space and time for them to reflect and practice the learning. Not all the men understood that this spacing was an intentional part of the learning design.

The sequencing of the modules, homework (assignments & action learning) worked well with one building on the next. The most helpful activities in person were the check-ins and check-outs where they were sharing stories and listening to each other stories which came from both the homework and the work context.

Facilitation Methods: It was important to practice validation and affirmation with the men both to help model this approach so they could use this with their people but also because this helped the men be vulnerable and have the comfort to share things they might not otherwise. This involved “talking the men up”, reinforcing, supporting, and celebrating the things they were putting effort into to encourage them to keep doing more. Up-coaching is supporting the good efforts and doing this in front of the others in the room to affirm the actions which helps encourage and create some peer momentum for others to do the same. A facilitator needs to model the behaviours you want to see happen more. Helping the participants in the places they need help; sometimes this is challenging people on what they are saying but it can also look like being supportive and acknowledging the messiness.

The most transformative and impactful parts of the course seemed to be:

- Interviews with women
- Women guest speakers
- Power and privilege
- Gender based violence

How you challenge is important, engaging people in a non-patriarchal non-righteous way, so as not to model what you don't want them to do. Being in touch with people's vulnerability and providing praise, affirmation, and space. This work involved regularly inviting the men into the conversation to contribute their stories and challenges so the group could learn together.

On a practical note, the survey monkey tool which allowed for participants to provide feedback after each session was helpful. The feedback allowed the facilitator to incorporate things participants needed as they were learning which built trust and created some accountability. This also assisted in reviewing and understanding where participants were at in their learning journey, how they were doing in terms of grasping content and concepts as well as building in accountability around doing the homework. The tool also allowed the facilitator to access the information and provide regular reminders to get things done immediately after sessions and just before the next session.

### *What were the challenges?*

For module one, Setting the stage – Understanding gender in the workplace, when asked what they liked least, most participants reported nothing they disliked. A few participants indicated the video “The Impossible Dream” and finding time to get the work done.

Again, for module two, Awareness of Gender, most of the participants did not have feedback about what they liked least though a few of the participants indicated they did not like the finger knitting exercise. A little over half of the participants did not have negative feedback about module three, Power and Gender.

A few did not like the More/Less activity and one person disliked the power wheel example in module three. Several indicated they wanted examples that had more relevance to the sector or their context, that the content grouped and categorized people and that they found some of it difficult to understand.

*"Some of the written content was a bit hard to comprehend by just reading it. The content became clearer once I completed the entire reading assignment and watched the videos"*

For module 4, Communication & Gender-based violence in the workplace, about half of the participants said there was nothing they disliked with a few who found hearing the statistics on gender-based violence difficult, the length of the videos, and homework was a challenge.

*"I feel the course has been helpful for me, I feel at times it can be a little out of my comfort zone. But I also think it needs to be because if it were not than nothing would ever change."*

Just over a third of the participants had nothing to share about module 5, with a few naming homework and dialogue in class were a challenge. When asked why, a quarter had nothing to share while a couple indicated

*"...I found it confusing at first. I guess I never really thought very much about this topic in the past. For me there is a man, a women and there are people that fall in-between those two but as for specific definitions and explanations on this its new material for me."*

the module was out of their comfort zone and that the ABC/FEARS example was too academic. Some reflections from participants include "It seems like I had my head in the sand for years not seeing what was going on around me" and "Never felt overly comfortable sharing information and speaking in a classroom setting. However, I must say that this class has helped me overcome this and it has been great to hear other people's point of view on these topics."

In the post-survey, when asked what they liked the least, a third of the participants indicated the course duration was too long with several mentioning the homework specifically.

### Facilitator feedback on the challenges

Facilitator feedback related to modules indicated there could be some further review around the balance between information, videos, activities, and actions. There wasn't a standard amount of time to get through after each module, some required more time than others. It would be good in future courses to provide some warning in advance when there is more time required for homework which allows the participants to be better prepared.

The participants had varying degrees of challenge around the conflict resolution module. There was mixed feedback on this; it worked well for some and less well for others, but it could be changed. The module design aimed for mid-range content and process to work with the perceived literacy and education level of participants. This meant that sometimes it was a stretch for some participants and for others less of a stretch.

Feedback about the course included participants finding the time commitment to the course a challenge; they felt the time to attend and do homework was a lot on top of other responsibilities. Hosting the session in a union hall was a conflict for some companies. There was a clear observational divide between unionized and non-unionized participants which did not negatively impact the course but was a sub-conflict in the group.

It was important to hold space at times for the facilitator to work through the challenging conversations, to distill them, recover and not bring things that were difficult back into the space with the participants. There are

aspects of this work that are harsh and hard that get shared and facilitators need to employ a process of debriefing as well as have strategies around self-care.

The pandemic delay did not seem to have an adverse effect on the delivery of the program.

### *What could be improved?*

Participants had very little feedback about improving the module one, Understanding Gender in the Workplace. Specific reflections and suggestions made include “Have actual woman speak not animation” and “Connect us with female leaders (if they are open to coaching others)”.

Most participants did not have suggestions for module two, Awareness of Gender, although the comments provided some additional feedback. “It would be helpful to see the number of women in schools vs men in schools for trades, and see what percent of women vs men get jobs...” and “More speakers on the subject and a method to find resolutions for situations”.

*“Honestly the only thing would be more women to speak about their experiences, I believe this has been the most valuable portion of the course so far.”*

For module three, almost half of the participants had nothing to share about improving the session but there was general feedback about the following: relevance to the industry, hear more from women in trades, need more in class understanding of content, more guest speakers, more videos about being a bystander, more conversations about women of race. “To hear from local trades women on what kinds of Ally and support have helped them best - big or small” and “To give the class a better general picture of what Women experience in Nova Scotia.”

Over half of the participants had nothing to share to improve the module four, Communication & Gender-based Violence in the Workplace. A couple indicated that they would like more content on allyship and conflict resolution. Feedback includes “More of their leadership and communication related to helping the women in trades I think could be good to help the class deal with making the jump from being a bystander to visibly ally” and “I feel like this session relied upon a lot of group engagement and requires the right group of people for it to be successful.”

Course participants were not asked for suggestions on improving module five, but facilitator observations indicate that participants were challenged by this module which is based on their level of conflict resolution knowledge and experience. The course material was designed to work for mid-level understanding and it was anticipated that this work would be challenging.

### **Facilitator feedback on improvements**

Provide more pre-course information to help participants understand how the course will go, expectations around homework and action learning could be reviewed for clarity.

The course should be regularly reviewed for content and materials to keep things relevant and current, as well as updating and tweaking things like the action learning activities.

## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Course Design and Delivery

### 6.0 Key Finding: Hearing Women's Experiences and Supported Dialogue

Most of the participants indicated their appreciation of having women in skilled trades as guest speakers talking about their personal and professional experiences and rated this module as very useful. Just under a third of them reported hearing from women as “eye opening” and liked the real-life stories. In feedback on improving the course, several participants shared they wanted to learn more from women in the trades and connecting with female leaders. Several comments included “To hear from local trades women on what kinds of Ally and support have helped them best - big or small” and “To give the class a better general picture of what women experience in Nova Scotia.”

- 6.1 **Recommendation:** The experience of safe and structured dialogue, supported by a skillful and experienced facilitator, can be replicated in workplaces and environments where women and men are needed to develop workplace culture change collaboratively. Further research and program offerings in this area are recommended.
- 6.2 **Recommendation:** Develop good quality, sharable and localized media that employers and supervisors can use to support raising awareness and creating a more welcoming workplace. The media should include diverse perspectives and reflect the many identities of skilled trades workers. It may help if media is accompanied by good, reflection questions that can be used to create conversation and dialogue amongst the group.

### 7.0 Key Finding: Homework and Time Investment

The amount of homework was not consistent between modules and some participants struggled with the amount of time needed to do homework and action learning activities.

- 7.1 **Recommendation:** While the program requires a time commitment that may feel onerous, shortening the program is not recommended. Instead, the facilitator should be more explicit about module-by-module time commitment and participants should be supported to understand expectations related to the program and to problem solve competing priorities.