INCREASING EQUITY AT THE WORKPLACE

JOB STRUCTURES SYSTEM TOOLKIT

STEP 4:
GENERATE IDEAS FOR INNOVATION

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WORK EQUITY

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4.0 Introduction

We have organized Step 4 of the Toolkit for the Job Structures System into two sections.

Section 1: The tasks in this section will help your organization generate ideas for innovations that can strengthen the equity of your overall Job Structures System, using the seven Levers for Change.

Section 2: Recognizing that innovations in flexible job structures practices – one of the Levers for Change – can be catalysts for deep change in the equity of the Job Structures System, your organization will focus particular attention on flexible job structures in Section 2.
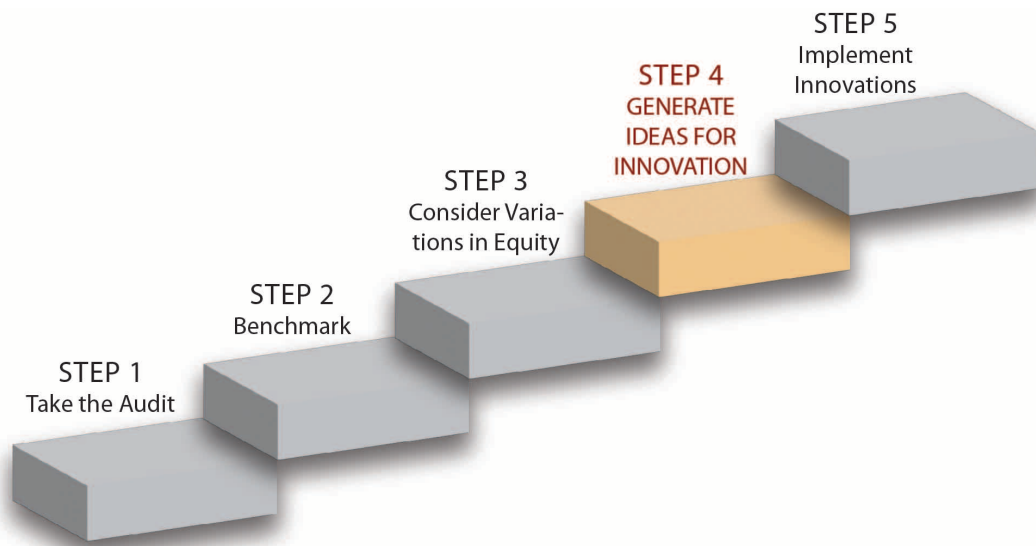

Figure 10: Step 4 of the Job Structures System Toolkit

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The process of design thinking values the diverse perspectives which can emerge from group conversations and debates. (See "Overview of the Job Structures System Toolkit.")

In consultation with your Equity Initiative Committee, the Leader(s) of your Equity Initiative should decide how to best engage different groups of employees in discussions about innovations that can strengthen the equity of your organization's Job Structures System.

Option 1: Your organization could invite the members of your DEI Committee to participate in one (or more) brainstorming activity.

Option 2: You might convene discussion groups (for example, brown bag lunches, focus groups, etc.) with employees who are affiliated with specific demographic and social identity groups to discuss innovations in your Job Structures System that could address some of their priorities and preferences.

Option 3: Your Equity Initiative Leader(s) could create a "suggestion box" to invite ideas from employees throughout the organization.

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4.2 Step 4 Tasks (Section 1 and Section 2)

Section 1: Tasks to Assess the Equity of Your Job Structures System

As noted in the Overview of this Toolkit, Work Equity recognizes that your organization has at its disposal seven mechanisms that have the potential to address some of the root causes of inequities embedded in your organization's employment systems. We refer to these mechanisms as Levers for Change. (Please see the "Overview of the Job Structures System Toolkit" for the discussion of the Levers for Change.)

Each of the nine questions in the audit of the Job Structures System (Step 1) addresses one of the seven Levers for Change:

1. Policies (Question #1)
2. Practices (Questions #2 and #3)
3. Planning/Evaluation (Question #4)
4. Assignment of Roles and Accountabilities (Question #5)
5. Workplace Culture (Questions #6 and #7)
6. Workplace Climate (Question #8)
7. Communication (Question #9)

Task 1: Rank Levers for Change from the Audit Items
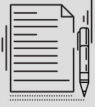
> Directions:
>
> The Leader(s) of your Equity Initiative should put the average scores of your organization's responses to the Audit questions for job structures that you calculated in Step 1.
>
> First, in Worksheet #7 (next page) enter the scores into Column A for each of the Levers for Change (that is, the scores for each of the items computed for Worksheet #3). Then complete Column B, ranking each of the Levers for Change by comparing the scores for each Lever.

Jobs Structures System Toolkit Worksheet #7
Ranking the Scores for the Levers for Change in the Job Structures System

	Column A: What was your organization's score for each lever for change? **(from Worksheet 3)** Put these scores in the open boxes below.	Column B: How strong is each lever for change? Rank order them for weakest to strongest. 1 = weakest lever (lowest mean score) 7 = strongest lever (highest mean score)
Policy Lever for Change		
1. To what extent does your organization have written policies which ensure that employees' access to different job structures is fair (for example, flexible work schedules)?		
Practice Levers for Change		
2. To what extent has your organization specified a fair process that supervisors should follow when considering employee requests for different types of job structures? (Add this score to the score for Audit question 3 to compute the average for the Practice Lever for Change, in bold below.)		
3. To what extent does your organization have practices to ensure that employees who work remotely or those who work non-traditional hours have access to technical assistance and advice? (Add this score to the score for Audit question 2 above to compute the average for the Practice Lever for Change, in bold below.		
Average Score of Two Items Above Use the average of questions 2 and 3 when you rank the Levers for Change in Column B.		
Planning and Evaluation Lever for Change		
4. To what extent does your organization routinely audit the fairness of employees' access to different types of job structures?		

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Worksheet #7 (continued)

	Column A: What was your organization's score for each lever for change? **(from Worksheet 3)** Put these scores in the open boxes below.	Column B: How strong is each lever for change? Rank order them for weakest to strongest. 1 = weakest lever (lowest mean score) 7 = strongest lever (highest mean score)
Assignment of Roles and Accountabilities Lever for Change		
5. To what extent does your organization hold one or more employees (e.g., supervisors; Director of DEI, etc.) accountable for monitoring the fairness of employee access to different types of job structures?		
Workplace Culture Levers for Change		
6. To what extent does your organization encourage employees to discuss work overload with their supervisors? (Add this score to the score for Audit question 7 to compute the average for the Workplace Culture Lever for Change, in bold below.)		
7. To what extent do the actions of your organizational leaders indicate that they believe there is a connection between DEI initiatives and equitable access to different job structures? (Add this score to the score for Audit question 6 above to compute the average for the Workplace Culture Lever for Change, in bold below.)		
Average Score of Two Items Above Use the average of questions 6 and 7 when you rank the Levers for Change in Column B.		
Workplace Climate Lever for Change		
8. To what extent has your organization "normalized" and de-stigmatized the use of different types of job structures?		
Communication Lever for Change		
9. To what extent has your organization adopted practices to ensure that ll employees have equitable access to information about the different types of job structures available to them?		

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The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can consider the rankings of the Levers for Change in your Job Structures System and identify opportunities to build on those that are already **strong** (that is, those that are **ranked the highest**). Summarize the observations below.

_____

_____

The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can identify ways to strength those Levers for Change that are currently **weak** (that is, those that are **ranked the lowest**). Summarize the observations below.

_____

_____

Task 2: Highlight Ideas for Innovation in the Job Structures System

Jobs Structures System Toolkit Worksheet #8
Your Ideas for Innovation in Levers for Change in the Job Structures System

Directions:
The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can use the worksheet below to specify possible innovations that can address root causes of inequities.

	Levers for Change	Your Ideas for Innovation	Organizational "Stakeholders" (including decision makers) in this Innovation
	Job Structures Policy		
	Job Structures Practices	Please Note: Task 3, below, elaborates on practice innovations because they can have a "multiplier effect," opening the doors for changes in other parts of the Job Structures System. You might want to save your ideas for Practice Innovation until you have completed Task 3.	
	Planning and Assessment (e.g., data collection) Related to Job Structures		
	Assignment of Roles and Accountabilities for the Equity of Job Structures		
	Workplace Culture Related to Job Structures		
	Workplace Climate of Inclusion Related to Job Structures		
	Communication Related to Job Structures		

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Section 2: Flexible Job Structures Practice Innovations

Task 3: Consider Ideas for Practice Innovation in Flexible Job Structures

Directions:

Your organization may want to adopt a design thinking process to imagine possible innovations in flexible job structures.

Design thinking is a process that can help your Equity Initiative Committee to move from insight to action by brainstorming ideas for your organization to pilot. You can leverage design thinking to create customized equity solutions for your organization.

The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can use Worksheet #9 (next page) to guide conversations about selected best practices innovations.

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Jobs Structures System Toolkit Worksheet #9
Options for Practice Innovation

	Is this option available? Yes or No	If this option is not available, could it be adopted by your organization? Yes or No	If this option is available to some but not all employees, could it be offered to groups of employees who currently cannot access this option? **Specify which employee groups.**
TIME			
Does your organization give employees some control/choice over weekly schedules (i.e., the times and days they are expected to work)?			
Does your organization give employees some choice about paid or unpaid overtime hours (that is, they can decline to work paid or unpaid overtime)?			
Does your organization give advance notice about changes in shifts to employees?			
Does your organization allow employees to move from full-time to part-time work and back again, while remaining in the same position or level?			
Does your organization allow employees to "split" a full-time job with another employee, having access to proportional benefits (e.g., job share)?			
Does your organization allow employees to compress the work week (working longer hours on fewer days)?			
Does your organization allow employees to phase into retirement (working reduced hours over a period of time prior to full retirement)?			
PLACE			
Does your organization allow employees to work remotely (e.g., from home) for some or all of the week?			
Can employees who work remotely choose which days they come to work at a work site?			
LEAVES (See also Compensation and Benefits Toolkit)			
Does your organization allow employees to take an extended leave/an extended career break (paid or unpaid) for caregiving or other personal or family responsibilities?			
Does your organization allow employees to take paid or unpaid time away from work for education or training?			
OVERALL IMPACT OF USING FLEXIBLE JOB STRUCTURES			
Does your organization expect supervisors to consider adjustments to job responsibilities so that employees who use flexible job structures can keep on their desired career trajectories?			
FLEXIBLE JOB STRUCTURES AS A TEAM EXPERIENCE			
Does your organization provide resources and supports to work groups that include an employee using a flexible job structure so that team productivity is maintained?			

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Task 4: Prioritize Your Ideas for Job Structures Practice Innovation

Directions:
The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can use the worksheet below to list their top ideas for job structures practice innovation.
The leader(s) of your Equity Initiative can develop an "elevator speech" that can be used to present your recommendations to top managers, decision-makers, and other key stakeholders.

Jobs Structures System Toolkit Worksheet #10
Your Ideas for Job Structure Practice Innovation

Ideas for Possible Innovation	Implementation Factors
Idea # 1: Summary of Key Components	• Purpose (Goals/Objectives) Draft Statement _____ • Expected (Measurable) Outcomes Draft Statement _____ • Pre-implementation Preparation (e.g., informational materials, training, etc.) Draft Statement _____ • Announcement/Enrollment Draft Statement _____ • Steps 1, 2, 3, etc. of Implementation Draft Statement _____ • Estimates of Time and Resources Needed for Implementation Draft Statement _____
Idea # 2: Summary of Key Components	• Purpose (Goals/Objectives) Draft Statement _____ • Expected (Measurable) Outcomes Draft Statement _____ • Pre-implementation Preparation (e.g., informational materials, training, etc.) Draft Statement _____ • Announcement/Enrollment Draft Statement _____ • Steps 1, 2, 3, etc. of Implementation Draft Statement _____ • Estimates of Time and Resources Needed for Implementation Draft Statement _____
Worksheet continued on next page ☞	

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Jobs Structures System Toolkit Worksheet #10 (continued)

Ideas for Possible Innovation	Implementation Factors
Idea # 3: Summary of Key Components	• Purpose (Goals/Objectives) Draft Statement _____ • Expected (Measurable) Outcomes Draft Statement _____ • Pre-implementation Preparation (e.g., informational materials, training, etc.) Draft Statement _____ • Announcement/Enrollment Draft Statement _____ • Steps 1, 2, 3, etc. of Implementation Draft Statement _____ • Estimates of Time and Resources Needed for Implementation Draft Statement _____

Task 5: Present Idea(s) to Leaders, Decision-Makers, and Other Stakeholders

Share your ideas for innovation with people/groups that might be stakeholders and decision-makers in flexible job structures, as well as people who will determine whether the innovation can be pilot tested.

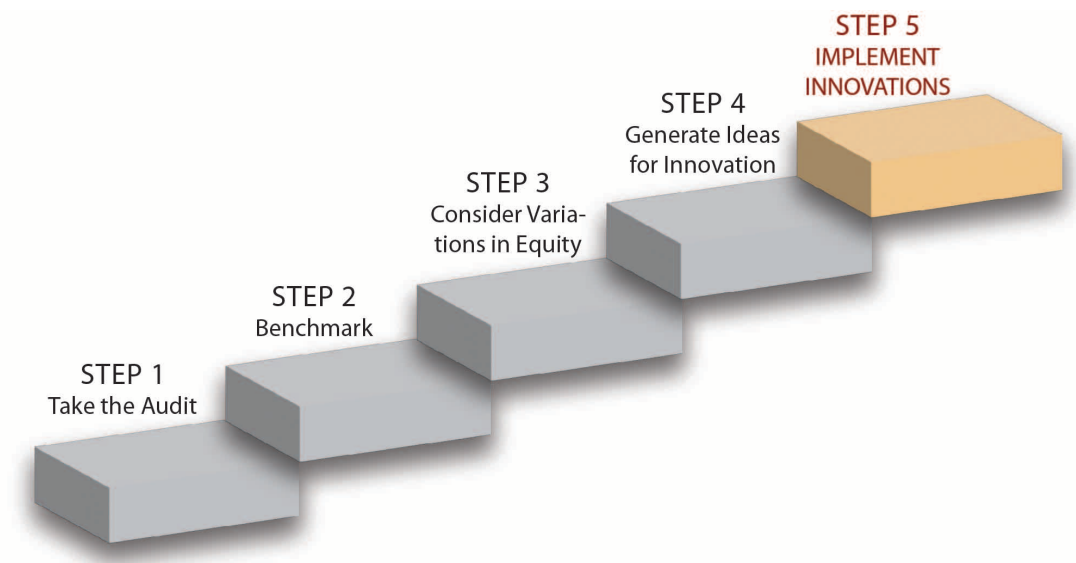☞ Go to Step 5 of the Job Structures System Toolkit: Implement Pilot of Innovations

Figure 11: Step 5 of the Job Structures System Toolkit