

## Case Study BHP: Hiring for Capability- Interrupting Bias in Talent Attraction

Mitchell Services applies global inclusion & diversity strategy experience to intentionally disrupt the subtle and not so subtle business processes that perpetuate inequity- targeting structural, cultural, interpersonal and personal barriers in the workplace.

Australian male-dominated industries face a skills shortage <sup>(1)</sup>. Organisations have long struggled to attract women to consider and apply for jobs in male-dominated industries. Australian industries can ill-afford to sideline a large percentage of qualified candidates. Social dominance theory suggests that structural barriers reinforce and perpetuate gender inequality in the workplace <sup>(2)</sup>. Organisations are gendered; reflecting our gendered societies <sup>(3)</sup>. Recruitment practices are inherently bias <sup>(3)</sup> unless intentionally interrupted.

BHP has set to disrupting the gendered nature of the industry, setting a 50 per cent workforce target by 2025. Traditionally, there has been a reliance in mining on front line operations experience for senior roles. The rise of technology has significantly changed mining operations, opening opportunities for transferable technology skills from other industries. BHP's new high-tech remote-control centre located in Brisbane, operates BHP's coal system in Western Australia, with new technical skills required outside the mining industry. BHP sought to interrupt bias in manager expectations- at hiring and promotion- by removing the requirement for specific previous operational experience in the mining industry for these roles. Hiring for capability focused requirements on intrinsic attributes, such a logical reasoning, instead of external attributes, such as qualifications and previous mining experience. Hiring for capability also enabled recruiters to widen their search to a range of different industries with similar skills including traffic controllers, medical technicians, IT programmers, etc... The impact of the bias interrupter was measured and women now make up 53 percent of the remote- control centre workforce.

Sources: <http://www.afr.com/leadership/management/bhp-will-hire-for-capability-not-experience-to-get-50-per-cent-women-20161101-gsfc5e>  
<https://specialreports.theaustralian.com.au/901225/still-something-wrong/>  
<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/.../bhp...remote...centre.../c9ff57627c89961a7843b79fe6a35a6d>

### Mitchell Services offers:

- Diversity & Inclusion Audit to review bias
- Agree on bias interrupters strategy
- Execute & measure ROI

1. ABS (2014) Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Feb 2014.
2. Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression. Cambridge University Press: NY.
3. Acker, J. (1992). Gendering Organizational Theory. In A. J. Mills & P. Tancred (Eds.), Gendering Organizational Analysis. London: Sage.
4. Heliman, M.E. (2000). The impact of situational factors on personnel decisions concerning women: Varying the sex composition of the applicant pool.