

# Recruitment: What are the issues?

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# Recruiting Women in Maths: What they say

“We would love to hire a strong woman in our department, but...

- there are not really any women in this area.”
- the women who applied were not good enough to make the short list.”
- we offered the job to a woman, but she didn't take it.”

**DISCUSS:** Your experiences with trying to recruit women.

# Where does the recruitment process begin?

- Selecting a candidate to offer the job to.
- Running the interviews.
- Creating the shortlist.
- Advertising the position.
- Writing the job advert.
- Requesting permission to recruit for an area.
- Before that?

# Building foundations

"We apply a rule to the seminars we run: that each seminar series should have a healthy proportion of women speaking. We make a real effort to look for PhD students and postdocs elsewhere whom we can invite and start to form an intellectual relationship with ... It is important to start on day 1 and discuss: how are we going to make this an environment where we have recognised and thought through biases ... We want women who come in to see this as a welcoming, positive environment ... It means that when we advertise a position, we have met a lot of women and they know this is a place where they will be encouraged and supported".

**DISCUSS:** How can we build good foundations to help recruitment of women?

# Why work to recruit more women?

Building a good foundation requires a cultural shift. Not everyone will be on board with this. Why is it important?

- Poor recruitment of women is a sign of narrow recruitment practices that will not yield the best candidates for positions.
- Female role models aid retention of female students in the discipline. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1047840X.2011.620935>
- Social justice requires equal opportunities for all.

**DISCUSS:** Should this be a priority? Is it a priority in your department? Why or why not? How do you get people on board?

# Ack! But we have a job we are about to advertise!

It is also possible to influence other stages of the process!

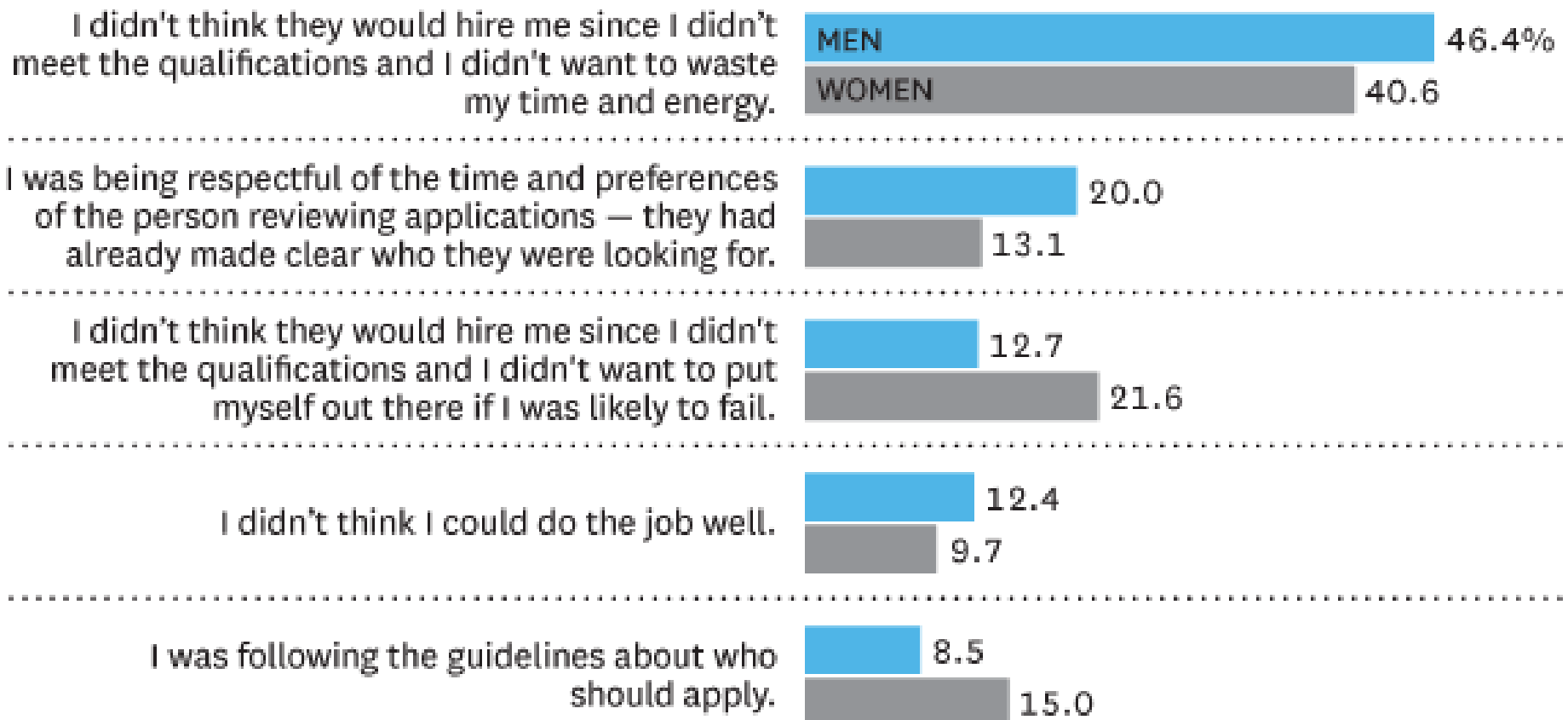
Writing a job ad:

- What area are you advertising? Are there women in this area? Find some names of women you would be happy to recruit for this job. Does your ad cover them? Is the ad narrow or broad?

Men apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women apply only if they meet 100% of them.

### WHY DIDN'T YOU APPLY FOR THAT JOB?

Men and women give their reasons.



# Writing job ads, cont'd.

“Women are interested in the company culture, values and flexibility of an organisation, areas that often get overlooked in the technical description of a job advert. This fact is backed up by research conducted by Akzo Nobel, which found that engineering adverts often alienate women, especially in the use of buzzwords more usually associated with ‘heavy’ engineering.”

“Recent research conducted by the HE STEM programme also identified specific barriers to women in applying for STEM roles. These included companies that appeared ‘arrogant’ or to be lacking a supportive or friendly environment.”

<http://www.nwed.org.uk/improving-the-recruitment-of-women-in-stem.html>

**DISCUSS:** Your experiences with job ads



# Advertising the position

Where do you advertise to reach good women candidates?

- Job sites?
- Subject mailing lists?
- Women in maths mailing lists?
- Personal networks?
- Directly approach suitable candidates?

**DISCUSS:** What has and has not worked for you?

# Thoughts on Shortlisting

“Men are often judged on their potential, but women are judged on their achievements,” Williams explains, adding that women have to provide *more* evidence of competence to be considered as competent as their male colleagues. What's more, “women’s mistakes tend to be noticed more and remembered longer, but women’s successes tend to be attributed to luck.”

Williams calls this pattern “prove it again.” Women literally need to prove themselves over and over again, where a similarly situated male colleague does not, she explains.

# Shortlisting thoughts (2)

## **Create clear criteria for success and transparency.**

When the criteria for evaluation are vague or no objective measures of performance exist, an individual's performance is likely to be ambiguous. When performance is ambiguous, people view women as less competent than men in STEM fields. Women and others facing bias are likely to do better in institutions with clear criteria for success, clear structures for evaluation, and transparency in the evaluation process.

Why so few? AAUW

# Shortlisting thoughts (3)

"We try to analyse those applications having tried to educate ourselves about all of the caring responsibilities people have, so we look at CVs with a view to, "has this person had to take time out for various reasons and what impact would that have." A period of leave doesn't just affect that period. It will have an effect on subsequent years as well."

# Creating a short list

**DISCUSS:** What difficulties do you have selecting women for short lists? What processes do you have to ensure all qualified women are short listed?

Would you consider rerunning a search that did not turn up a sufficient number of women on a short list?

# Interviewing

- Who do the candidates get to meet?
- What do they see of the department? What students? Staff? What is on the walls—ie, only photos of old men?
- Is there a setting in which they can ask questions about the community, schools, etc.?
- What is the tone of the interview? Welcoming? Adversarial? Formal?

Discuss: What is your experience of interviewing/being interviewed? How can this be done to improve outcomes for women?

# Job Offers

"Make sure that they have the right offer, that they know the department really wants them and that people will listen to them if they want to tweak the offer or negotiate. Some people are more reluctant to negotiate directly. I try to ask 'what do you want? We want you here, what do you need in order to accept?' I have found this very helpful in the past."

**DISCUSS:** How can you increase the chance women will accept if they are offered the job?

# Thinking outside the box

What about women who have followed partners or returned from maternity leave? Could they be good candidates with a bit more research under their belts?

60 per cent of women returners to STEM careers faced barriers to doing so (WES study)

**Daphne Jackson Fellowships:** 2 year part time research fellowships

**LMS Grace Chisholm Young Fellowships:** (£500 for candidate, £500 for institution, give email, library, support, mentoring for research). Two recent fellows have since taken up permanent lecturing positions in the UK!



# Coming to you soon (hopefully...)

Directory of UK mathematicians, searchable by various criteria.

UK Women in Mathematics Linked In page