



Growing your trades workforce:

how to attract
women to your jobs

“ I've got nothing but good to say about working with women. They are careful, methodical, good with the gear. I'd love to see more women coming into the industry. ”

**Peter Turner, Managing Director,
Peter Turner Contracting**



**John Jansen,
Electrical Supervisor,
University of Canterbury:**

“It’s about the best person for the job and Joy is it: she is an ideal fit for the team and plays a key role.”

**Joy Lalahi, Electrical
Apprentice, University of
Canterbury:**

“I have the drive to prove I’m great at my job, as good as anyone. I genuinely enjoy what I do. It’s great to be part of such a knowledgeable team.”

Trade worker shortages

Did you know that the National Construction Pipeline Report (October 2014) predicts very high demand for building and construction in New Zealand through to the beginning of 2019?

The forecast shows high rates of growth over a longer period than at any time in the last 40 years. Construction activity in New Zealand is forecast to increase ten percent every year to 2019.

There is already a shortage of trade workers, and the demand for trades labour will continue to grow.

Half the working age population is female, but only one percent of plumbers, electricians and carpenters/joiners are women.

It makes good business sense to think about how to attract women to your jobs.

Advantages of hiring women

The employers profiled here think that having women in their teams is a no-brainer.

They say women:

- have strong communication skills that can be vital on a busy jobsite
- are great at multi-tasking
- attend to details
- are well-organised, which gets the job done
- bring a different set of abilities and different perspectives.

Women are loyal to good employers and they are committed to their communities.

Having a diverse workforce improves your bottom line.



Get a competitive edge

Including more tradeswomen in your workforce:

- means you choose from a bigger pool to get the best people
- helps you address your worker shortages
- can strengthen your connection to your customers and to your community
- means that customers may choose your business because you employ women.

Many women are training and more can be trained to meet your workforce needs. In 2014 about 400 women enrolled in Christchurch Polytech's (CPIT) Building/Construction and Engineering Trades Programmes.

In June 2014 there were 137,500 women available for work, or seeking more hours, across New Zealand.

If you already employ tradeswomen, let people know. Highlight your great stories in trade magazines and at business events.

Get the story out there.

Have you thought about trades training apprenticeships? To find out more about NZ Apprenticeships go to:

www.tec.govt.nz/Learners-Organisations/Learners/Learn-about/Apprenticeships/

Grow your business

Women working in the trades have shown that they can enhance the quality, safety and performance of your business.

Employers have found that women are:

- keen to learn and can come up to speed quickly
- willing to use big machines and equipment
- careful with expensive equipment
- aware of health and safety rules
- reliable
- helpful in creating a great team atmosphere.

To find out more about the Māori and Pasifika Trades Training initiative go to:

www.mbie.govt.nz/what-we-do/business-growth-agenda/skilled-safe-workplaces/maori-pasifika-trades-training-initiative



**Melissa Sheridan,
Project Engineer,
Worthington Contracting:**

“I enjoy the dynamic nature of the work, both in the office and on site, problem solving, interacting with people, and seeing each project develop to completion. ”

**Kenny Corrigan,
General Manager,
Worthington Contracting:**

“Women can bring a different set of abilities compared with men, which ultimately helps to broaden our overall set of skills in our company. Along with bringing a different perspective, Melissa is a great communicator and hard-working. ”

**Emily Sutton, Water
Operations Labourer,
City Care:**

“I really enjoy working in the community and with the residents. This is such a rewarding job.... The guys I work with are great and we have a really good team atmosphere.”

**Onno Mulder, Chief Executive
Officer, City Care:**

“Emily has excelled in her role and is well positioned on her City Care career path. We’re proud to have her on the team.”





**Jessie Johns, Driver,
Peter Turner Contracting:**

““ I can see a good future where I will keep learning. Every day there is something new and there is plenty of work. ””

**Alan Stanton, General
Manager – Upper South
Island, Downer:**

““ Women bring a different perspective to the business and this makes a positive difference to the way our teams operate. ””

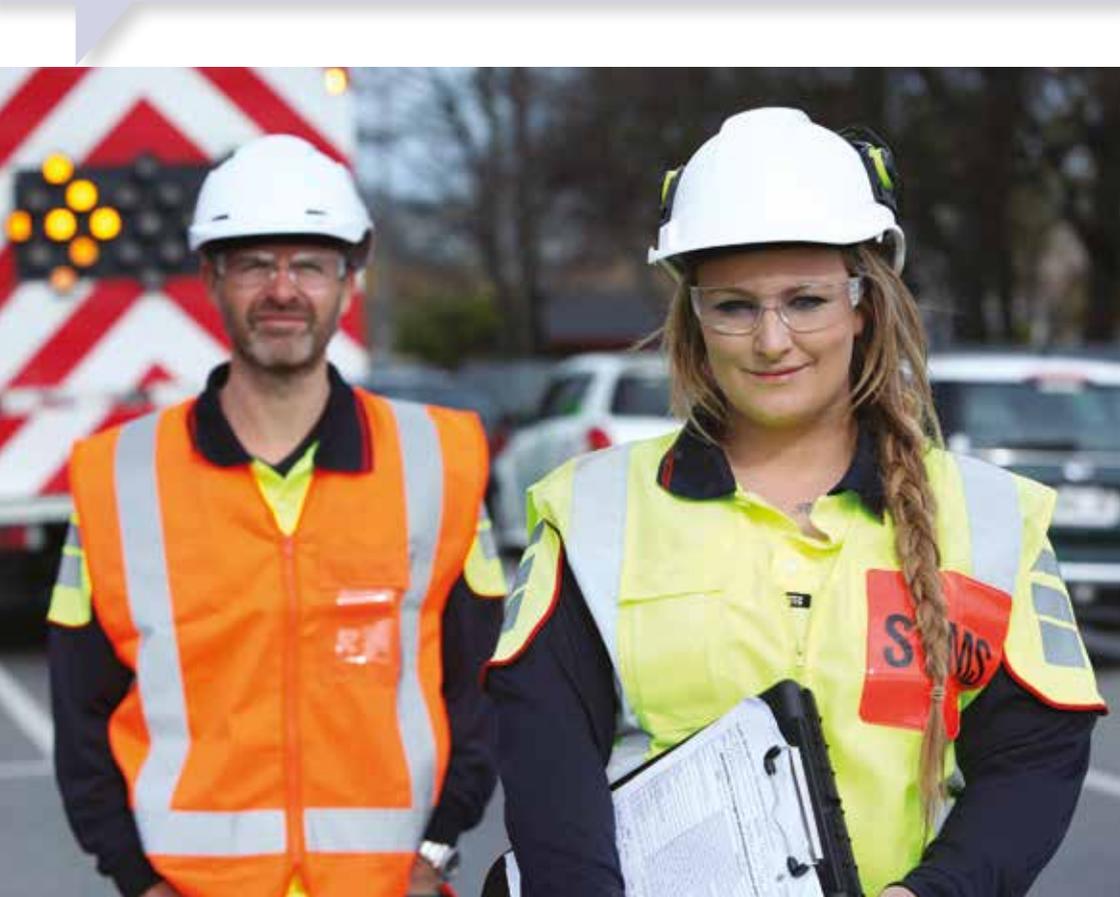


**Dean Hyde, Director,
Men at Work:**

“We have seen a growing number of women working with us. We were the very proud recipients of the very first ‘Women in Construction Excellence Award’ in 2014. We are aiming to continue this growth so welcome more women into our part of the construction industry.”

**Keshia Armstrong, Site Traffic
Management Supervisor,
Men at Work:**

“I love working for Men at Work. I enjoy meeting people, the safety and compliance responsibility of the role, being out and about, the physical and mental challenges, and the variety of work. I have found my place and am having fun doing it. Life is good.”



Take action: how to get women on your team

In your job ads

- welcome job applications from women
- think about the words you use, for example, use tradesperson instead of tradesman
- use pictures of women working in your business to set the scene.

One construction employer recruited younger workers to meet increased demand for their services and an ageing male workforce. Their job ads targeted young people: the response was good and to their surprise they received applications from young women. The first woman they employed has excelled in the job and progressed quickly through the ranks, and the company has since employed more young women.

Ask around – word of mouth

- contact industry bodies and businesses you know that employ women and hear first-hand how they brought women into their teams
- use your family, social and work networks and ask around for women who are keen to train, or are already trained and are keen to work.

What to do on your worksites?

- make your worksites good places to work for all your employees, including women
- get the gear that means women will be safe on site and ‘fit in’
- make it clear in your job ads that you welcome women.

Get talking

- let the training bodies know you are keen to employ women:
 - talk to your local polytechnics to find out about women who will soon be qualified and let them know you want women on your team
 - talk to your industry training bodies about women trainees and apprentices.

Invest in your future workforce

- have tradeswomen speak at careers events and schools
- participate as a speaker at “taster courses” at your local polytechnic to find your future employees.

Get more ideas from

Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO):

This is New Zealand's largest provider of construction trade apprenticeships. The BCITO's training advisers develop training programmes specific to each trainee and their training environment.

www.bcito.org.nz

Connexis (Infrastructure Industry Training Organisation):

Connexis offers a range of qualifications that recognise the skills and knowledge of people working in infrastructure.

www.connexis.org.nz

Ultimit is the site for women who are thinking about a career in the Electricity Supply Industry.

www.ultimit.co.nz

National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC):

NAWIC informs and upskills women in construction and promotes networking and information sharing.

www.nawic.org.nz

New Zealand Chambers of Commerce: Your local Chamber of Commerce promotes, supports and encourages sustainable, profitable business growth.

Civil Contractors New Zealand (CCNZ) formerly New Zealand Contractors' Federation: CCNZ members are engaged in civil engineering construction and general contracting.

www.civilcontractors.co.nz

Stronger Canterbury Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT): SCIRT is responsible for rebuilding Christchurch's horizontal infrastructure. It has been active in supporting and promoting women in construction.

www.strongerchristchurch.govt.nz

Women in Road Transport: This group was created in 2014 and provides success stories and networking opportunities for women.

www.rtfnz.co.nz/women_in_road_transport



**Rachel Kirk, Driver/Operator –
Sealing Team, Downer:**

“ Gender isn't relevant in this industry, it is your ability to do the job. Key attributes that anyone needs in the construction industry are humility and humour. ”

This handbook responds to questions from construction employers about how to get more women into construction jobs.



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