

WOMEN IN COACHING

Strategies for sport organisations to combat gender stereotypes or biases



✓ Provide female coaches with tools and resources to increase awareness of:

- Key leadership skills for women, and the effects of stereotypic perceptions to career development.

“People like CEOs or higher up people within the organisation can help change attitudes and mindsets and some are actually doing this really well. They are helping people to see beyond their biases without being patronising to them...supporting them to develop in an environment that is inclusive.” *Tabitha*

✓ Assess the work environment of female coaches and identify any situations where they may be at risk of stereotypical bias, including unfair comments, statements, situations or circumstances.

- Create a gender charter that aims to encourage gender equity, diversity and a sense of belongingness in sport coaching settings.

“So there are some opportunities for female coaches for development, progression and retention, but unfortunately, such opportunities are seen as tick boxes...this kind of toxic culture where people are thinking that it's a tick box because, first it will be a female, and then it will be someone from another ethnicity and basically, the culture then becomes one of spite rather than actually of, okay, we've actually got everyone of talent here which is the whole point.” *Claire*

✓ Create and implement innovative work practices that target stereotypic bias by addressing specific areas of risk.

- Create situations where male and female coaches coach together in a cooperative manner;
- Educate athletes on the value of coaches regardless of their gender and other demographic characteristics;
- Provide policies related to recruitment, retention, progression, work contracts (e.g., flexible hours, job share) that are transparent and inclusive.

“I think some of the big biases come from...successful high-performance athletes who have had a very good experience...and then they're very judgmental of anyone who wants to change anything, and so they'll be like, 'this wasn't how it was done; we were really successful doing it this way, so why change it?'” *Fiona*