

Women in Automotive

Voices From Within



**AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRIES
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA**

The AWAKE Project

Advancing **Women** in **Automotive**
- **Knowledge Exchange**



The AWAKE Project

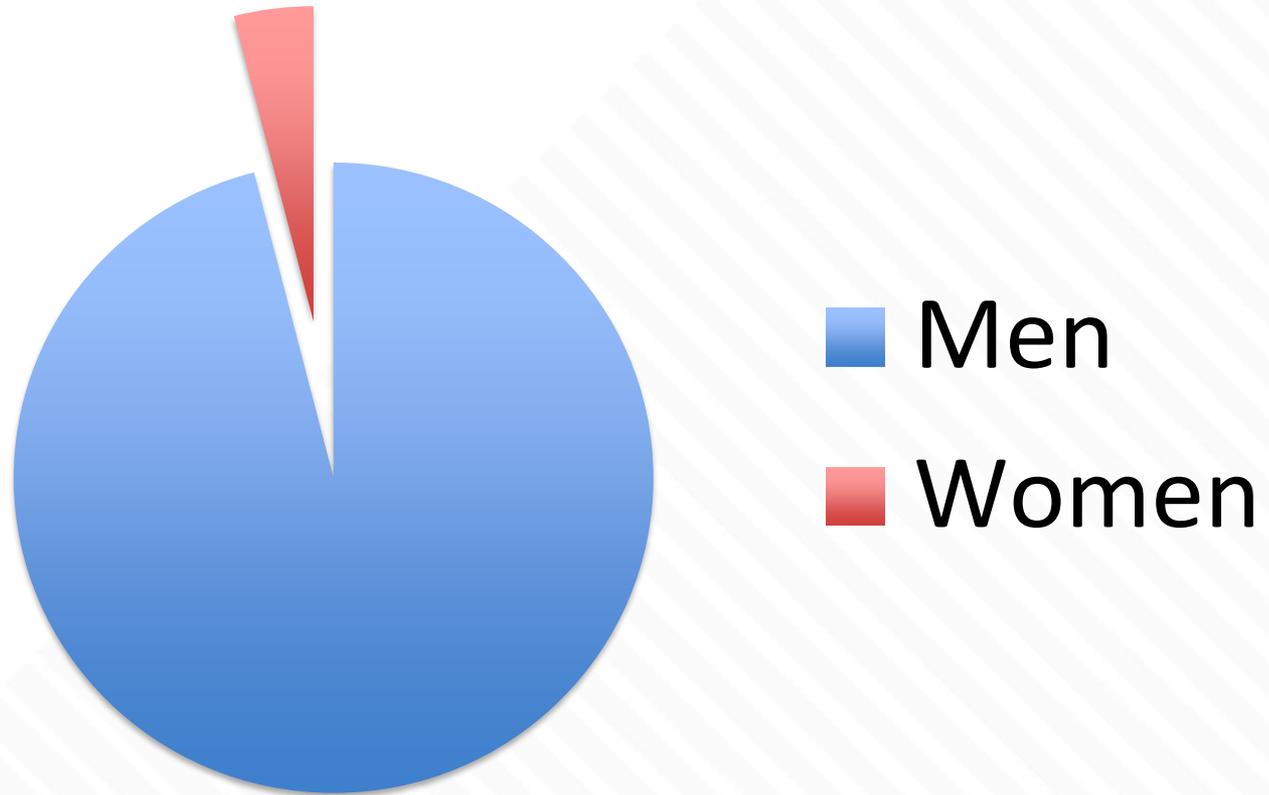
- 3-year project
- Female ambassadors from across country
- Supported by industry leaders
- Partial funding from Status of Women Canada

Why is this project important?

- Industry labour shortage
- Women = untapped pool
- Diverse workforce → greater success



It's 2016! – and yet in automotive...



The good news is...

Champions –
women *and* men
– are stepping up



Project Supporters



- See great opportunity
- Recognize value of gender equality
- Understand how to support a diverse work culture

AWAKE - Phase 1

Research objectives:

- Examine landscape for women in industry
- Explore how existing HR policies support or hinder recruitment, retention & advancement
- Identify best practices from other industries with similar challenges

What we did:

Convened focus groups

Surveyed HR staff in
aftermarket companies



Emerging Themes

- Women's acceptance within industry
- The impact of workplace culture
- Public perception of industry opportunities
- Resources for women in the sector

Focus Group Key Findings

- Women:
- Are conscious of standing out
 - Feel they have to work 'twice as hard' as men
 - Are often assumed to be admin staff – gender stereotyping

*“My 18-yr-old daughter went into a shop
to apply for an apprenticeship...
The manager blatantly told her
she would be a distraction”*

Key Findings

- WOMEN:
- Question their knowledge
 - See self-confidence as key
 - Believe success requires ‘adopting a thick skin and learning not to take stuff personally’
 - Are proud of having worked hard to get to where they are

*“Even when you’re in a meeting,
you’re not treated equally.
When I asked my boss questions,
he would direct his answers to
the other two males in the room.”*

Focus Group Key Findings

Women
say:

- Sexual harassment is common
- The presence of other women helps
- Senior managers set the tone
- Policies & procedures (health, safety, harassment) make a workplace more welcoming to women

*“Sometimes it’s extremely intimidating,
uncomfortable... you feel like a piece of meat.
You walk into the shop, everyone stops working.
You have to be very strong to say
‘I don’t really care what these guys
are thinking right now.’”*

Focus Group Key Findings

Women's views
on industry's
employment
opportunities:

- 85% fell into job, had never considered industry before – or family business
- See jobs as enticing, but remain concerned about degree of male-domination
- Want to share positive experiences to recruit more women into industry
- Want to see more women profiled in marketing materials

“People need more knowledge about the industry...

In high school I didn't know there were any opportunities and now I can see there are so many ways women can grow in this industry.

We should have presentations in high schools and colleges to get the word out.”

Gap Analysis

- Women say...
 - Hard industry to work in as a woman
 - Have to work twice as hard
 - Subject to discrimination and harassment
- HR professionals say...
 - They don't have an issue retaining their women employees (96%)

Gap Analysis

- Women say...
 - They really didn't consider automotive
 - They don't see themselves in recruitment materials
 - Had little knowledge of the entire industry, supply chain, etc.
- HR professionals say...
 - They don't have a problem recruiting women (75%)
 - They focus on recruiting the 'right person'
 - Blame labour shortage on 'lack of qualified candidates'

Recommendations

Create an inclusive culture in the workplace.

Recommendations

- 1) Zero tolerance for gender role stereotyping – comes from top down
- 2) Develop structure to address harassment in the workplace
- 3) Promote opportunities for cross-training to enhance employees' understanding of all aspects of the industry
- 4) Develop and implement formal performance reviews to ensure all employees have clear expectations and equitable pathways to advancement
- 5) Profile women working in the aftermarket in trade magazines

Recommendations

Enhance public awareness of industry opportunities for women

Recommendations

- 1) Includes images of women working in the industry in materials
- 2) Develop recruitment campaign that targets all members of the public (with high schools, colleges, trade schools, school boards, internship programs)

Recommendations

Support women in the sector

Recommendations

- 1) Introduce a formal mentoring program
- 2) Support the federal government's policy requiring companies to report on how many of their directors, senior officers, are women
- 3) Support women participation in women's leadership events
- 4) Ensure that women have equal access to industry networking events

Recommendations

Support from the Government of Canada

Recommendations

- 1) Continue to fund educational training programs that target under-represented groups such as women
- 2) Provide additional incentives for companies in the automotive aftermarket sector to hire service technician apprentices
- 3) Fund programs at the school board and community college level to address the low representation of female students in technology and trades programs
- 4) Provide incentives for companies interested in diversifying their workforce
- 5) Fund media campaigns to change the perception of women in the automotive industry and break down stereotypes.

Next Steps

- Build a network of champions (men and women)
- Table report at CEO roundtable
- Launch the report and depose to the provincial and federal governments
- Partner with educational institutions
- Develop tools
 - Online portal
 - Mentorship program