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Gender Equity Case Study

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Creating a welcoming and equitable environment for all staff has always been both a personal and professional goal for you, and you take pride in having achieved that climate in your administrative area.

Last week, one of the senior administrators in your unit, Gerry Watson, came to you to share a recent conversation she had with Jane Martinez. Jane approached Gerry to discuss her concerns about diversity issues and especially the treatment of women. Her perception is that women are not treated equally in hiring, promotion, and professional development. She also feels that women are marginalized by golf outings, workplace conversations about sports, and "working" lunches organized and attended primarily by the men in the office. She also observed that men talk considerably more than women in meetings, and she believes this is because men are more likely to have their comments and suggestions taken seriously.

At the conclusion of the meeting with Gerry, you expressed appreciation for the conversation and indicate that you need to give the matter some thought. Because of your commitment to a cordial and equitable workplace and your assessment that things are functioning well in this regard, these comments surprise and trouble you.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What are the key issues and/or problems?
2. What strategies would you employ to address them?
3. Who would you include in your process? Why?
4. What process would be appropriate? What is your rationale?
5. Are there principles that you can generalize from this case?