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# WGEA gender gap employer statements:



## debunking the top ten excuses

plus some Employer Statement facts you definitely don't know yet

## introduction:

This article is aimed at professionals in HR, Payroll, DEI, and/or ESG, and responsible for WGEA reporting. It highlights that failing to publish an Employer Statement can be a negative message, regardless of an organisation's commitment to gender equality. With 80% of organisations missing the opportunity to shape their narrative and engage stakeholders so far, the risk extends to potentially uncomfortable questions from your Chairperson, Directors, or CEO, wondering "where's our statement?" The article addresses ten poor excuses for not utilising this powerful tool and underscores the importance of using data to control your organisation's story. It offers both a concise overview and more detailed content for further insight.

## summary:

### #1 ***I didn't know they exist. But now you do and so do some key stakeholders.***

Since April 2024, employers with over 100 employees must report gender equality data to WGEA, yet only 20% of organisations have taken control of the narrative of their gender pay gap story.

### #2 ***They're not compulsory... are they? Not compulsory doesn't mean unnecessary:***

Publishing an Employer Statement is a smart tactic to manage reputational risk and stakeholder perceptions well beyond a compliance driven focus on gender equality.

### #3 ***I just don't get it. Uncertainty is avoidable:***

When proficiently developed, an Employer Statement is also a unique opportunity for all internal stakeholders to better understand the organisational gender pay gap from a competitive viewpoint.

### #4 ***I just don't care! Others do care so apathy isn't an option:***

Even if you may not personally care about gender equality, some key stakeholders, likely do, in fact, some very much - making it essential to take notice and act.

### #5 ***No-one in our industry is doing them. Industry norms are changing:***

Employers across all industries, including male-dominated ones, are publishing employer statements. Staying silent risks being left behind and/or perceived to be apathetic.

### #6 ***I don't understand "the why?". The cost of action vs the opportunity cost of inaction:***

Gender pay gaps influence stakeholder decisions; a well-crafted statement provides transparency, giving you the opportunity to promote the strength of your brand and/or mitigate potential risks.

### #7 ***We're not big enough / don't have the budget. You can't afford not to:***

Even small organisations can publish impactful statements without significant resources, making cost a weak excuse, especially when consider the opportunity cost.

### #8 ***We don't want to go public. You already are and silence speaks volumes:***

Gender pay gaps are already public, and failing to comment allows stakeholders to draw their own - potentially unfavourable - conclusions, regardless of your gender pay gap results.

### #9 ***I don't know where to start. Start with establishing a baseline:***

Begin with baseline 22/23 data, analyse gaps, outline strategy and tactics, update with 23/24 data and tailor the message to your audience. Develop a template for a growing story into the future.

### #10 ***I don't have the time. Time is running out so seek assistance now if required:***

With deadlines approaching, prioritising the Employer Statement is crucial to control your narrative, demonstrate progress and proactively manage the changing reporting landscape.

**Need help?** Having identified, collated and analysed close to a thousand WGEA Employer Statements and links, [people – people performance](#) is uniquely placed to help with a straight-forward, inclusive and flexible three-step approach to Employer Statement development called [people ESP](#). Collectively, let's document your gender pay gap journey over time and control the narrative of your story now and into the future.

## extended discussion:

If you work in HR, Payroll, DEI, or ESG and are responsible for WGEA reporting, this article is for you - ideally before your Chief People Officer, CEO, or Board reads it.

Regardless of your gender pay gap results, whether your organisation views gender equality as a strategic priority or merely a compliance burden, failing to provide an Employer Statement can convey the same message: "We don't care." This should be considered from strategic and risk management perspectives.

Currently, 80% of organisations are missing a critical opportunity to shape their gender equality narrative and engage stakeholders, whether they are gender pay gap leaders, followers, or laggards. Avoiding this can dilute competitive advantage and fail to mitigate some risks alienating key stakeholders - including employees, customers, investors, managers, or board members - who may care more than you realise.

This article outlines ten flawed reasons organisations avoid this simple yet impactful tool. Perception matters. You can use your data to tell the story you want others to hear, now and into the future.

### ten of the worst excuses for not publishing an employer statement



#### #1: I didn't know they exist.

Well, for some of you that has just changed.

Since April 2024, private sector employers with over 100 employees have been required to report gender equality data to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). Alongside this obligation, organisations can upload a link to an Employer Statement via the WGEA Employer Portal to be published on the WGEA Data Explorer. This statement allows employers to contextualise their data, communicate progress, and outline their commitment and in some cases strategy to workplace gender equality.

So now you know... and just as importantly, your Chief People Officer, CEO, Directors and the Chair may also be more likely to know. Furthermore, not only do they know, but they also are more likely to know the top ten poor excuses you shouldn't use to respond when asked the question. Do you really want them asking you the question before you've got at least half-an-idea of how to respond to their query in a manner slightly more in depth and duration than the average [TikTok](#) video?



#### #2: They're not compulsory... are they?

Neither is bowel cancer screening for over 50s, but that does not stop it from being a bloody good idea.

In our research, not only did we deep dive into the WGEA baseline 22/23 data for 10,658 individual employers, but we also identified, read and analysed the 2,000+ Employer Statement links provided.

Employers have tried plenty of different approaches to either rise above the pack or play catch up. Even complete laggards - with gender pay gaps in the lowest (fourth) quartile - are using it as a tool for reputational risk mitigation through engaging with their stakeholders on their journey in this regard.



### #3: I just don't get it.

It's okay if you don't fully understand your gender pay gap yet—most organisations don't. It's a journey.

While reviewing your WGEA Executive Summary or Industry Benchmark Reports provides valuable insights, these are only part of the path to understanding your gender pay gap from a competitive perspective and crafting an Employer Statement. Our research shows the proportion of employers publishing Employer Statements increases as gender pay gaps worsen. Organisations in the worst (4th) quartile have published over twice as many statements as those in the best (1st) quartile. Interestingly, over 75% of these statements primarily focus on mitigating reputational risks, while only 25% highlight the gender pay gap as a potential advantage. Most statements, however, include elements of both approaches.

Despite this, only 20% of employers have uploaded a statement, leaving the majority further exposed to reputational risks and/or a diluted opportunity to capitalise on their gender pay gap benefits. Many are also missing the opportunity to publicly acknowledge their teams' contributions in addressing this critical issue.



### #4: I just don't care!

You may not care deeply about the gender pay gap, but others do—some, quite a lot.

In a world of competing priorities, it's true that not everyone prioritises gender equality. On one hand, there is substantial evidence linking strong business performance and bottom-line results to effective diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs, many of which focus specifically on gender. On the other hand, there is also research highlighting the limitations of DEI programs. Can both perspectives be valid? Absolutely. Success in DEI is not guaranteed—it depends on various factors, including analysis, leadership, clear objectives, thoughtful tactics, accountability, and the calibre of the team driving the initiatives.

Even if gender pay gaps don't resonate personally with you, consider this: others connected to your organisation care—a lot. These could be individuals whose opinions you value and/or those who are critical to the organisation's success. How deeply they care about this issue may surprise you. It's far better to assume they care now than to find out when it's too late to act.



### #5: No-one in our industry is doing them.

Employers in every single industry division, even male-dominated ones are responding.

Whilst there are some noticeable variations across the industry divisions, every single industry within the primary employer data set had multiple occurrences of an Employer Statement link. In terms of workforce composition, this includes male-dominated, gender-neutral and female-dominated industry divisions.

In fact some industries have close to 50% of all employers. So look at it this way, if you're in an industry where the percentage of reports are high then there is more pressure for you to play catch up. If not, it actually presents itself as an opportunity to stand out from the crowd. It could be the final difference between someone choosing to apply for a role in your company or buy your product versus a competitor.



## #6: I don't understand "the why?"

The business case lies somewhere between the knowns and the unknowns.

We know stakeholders care about gender pay gaps, but we don't know how many – although we may assume more than 51% of the working population. We also don't know how deeply they care to the point of influencing decision making - whether to apply for a job, leave a role, become a customer, or buy shares.

We know gender pay gaps are published, but we don't know how many people actively search this data. We know that organisations can provide context through an Employer Statement but we also know that only 20% have seized this opportunity. Now, consider your stakeholders - internal (staff, management, executives, board) and external (customers, members, clients, investors, regulators, media and the public). What is the likelihood and impact from just one single (existing or potential) stakeholder choosing to leave or not join due to your gender pay gap? Now, multiply this by how many might care deeply enough to act. This is the "why" for addressing your gender pay gaps - the benefits and costs versus the opportunity costs.



## #7: We're not big enough / don't have the budget.

Although the size of your organisation and its wallet plays a role, it's not a valid excuse.

The data shows an increasing relationship between the scale of the organisation (by number of employees) and the likelihood of them publishing an Employer Statement. In fact, almost half (48.1%) of the largest sized employers (5000+), have utilised the opportunity. However, it is important to note that over a quarter (26.1%) of all employer statements come from the smallest employer category size (100–249 employees). Size may influence the time and resource allocation but it doesn't justify neglecting the task.

Our research examined many components of those published Employer Statements, including size and format. We found that while some extend to 32 pages, a concise, well-crafted statement - typically between two (the median) and four (the mean or average) pages can establish a baseline. With the right guidance, creating an effective statement doesn't need to be resource-intensive or costly. We offer a straightforward, inclusive, and flexible three-step process to help build impactful Employer Statements.



## #8: We don't want to go public.

Whoops. You're too late. Gender pay gaps are already public.

Now is not the smartest time to be a gender pay gap ostrich with your head down munching on savannah grass. Sometimes not saying anything can be perceived as *saying nothing on purpose*.

PR teams shouldn't have sole control over the decision on whether or not to publish an Employer Statement, nor the design of them, as some will lack the detailed knowledge of gender pay gaps, equality issues and WGEA reporting required. Similarly, DEI teams alone shouldn't take full control. However, the involvement of both is essential. Creating an effective statement requires a collaborative, inclusion-focused effort that reflects the equity interests of diverse internal and external stakeholders. Employer Statements produced in isolation by either are easy to spot—collaboration ensures a balanced, impactful message.



## #9: I don't know where to start.

Start at the beginning.

Whether you're a Chair, CEO, Director, CPO, DEI or ESG Officer, tackling gender pay gaps, equality, and Employer Statements requires a special skill set. The process can be complex - requiring a solid understanding of resourcing, remuneration and the relativity of the two to formulate a resolve. It can be counterintuitive. For example, hiring more women can worsen pay gaps if new hires are in entry-level roles.

Use the baseline 2022/23 data as the starting point for your journey. Identify your position and priorities. Find the best data to tell a compelling competitive story. Analyse workforce composition, industry, business size, leadership and key drivers of your pay gap. Outline initiatives taken and incorporate updates from the 2023/24 period. Define your target audience, tailor your communication and develop a communication that aligns with your objectives. Need Help? Then get in touch.



## #10: I don't have the time.

Well time is certainly running out.

At most, there are only 50 business days or so at the time of writing before your gender pay gaps are published, even far less with compulsory office closures and team members taking further time off during the festive season. You have limited time to get your Employer Statement ready to roll.

There is also close to 80 days before you're required to upload the 24/25 data, which will be published in early 2026. This will be the third years' worth of reporting. The short time invested between now and then is all you have to make an impact for the formal reporting published over the next year.

What is the risk (and opportunity cost to the organisation) of losing just one customer, one staff member, one manager, one executive, one director, one supplier or one investor because the time and opportunity to invest in communicating your gender pay gap and equality journey was ignored?

## conclusion:

Regardless of current gender pay gaps, business size, industry, resources, and even your personal attitude towards gender equality, publishing a gender pay gap WGEA Employer Statement, gives your organisation the opportunity to take charge and control the narrative of your story in this regard.

Although time is running out, with the right expertise behind you, you can make the deadline if you act now. Not only have we analysed the thousands of records within the WGEA employer data reporting, but we've also identified, collated, read and analysed all of the 1,000+ published employer statement links.

In fact, we think we know more about Employer Statements than anyone else in the country - from size, content and format right down to where employers are saving their files on their websites or external content platforms. We incorporate our observations of the good, the bad and the ugly of what we've seen in existing employer statements to your benefit, to avoid common mistakes, and include best practices within to build a best-fit WGEA Employer Statement to document your gender pay gap journey over time and control the narrative of your gender equality story.

## for the other 20%:

The target audience for this report, is clearly key decision makers, influencers and senior stakeholders of the 80% of those organisations who as of yet, have not published a WGEA Employer Statement. However, if you are amongst the other 20% who have and/or are currently working on the 23/24 statement, feel free to get in touch. Our flexible development process can be adapted to both incorporate the good of what you've created so far and use our insights to move it past better to best. Likewise, we can help you avoid the bad and the ugly mistakes we've seen out there – and there are quite a few.

## need a little gender pay gap ESP?

Our new Employer Statement Program (ESP) helps you quickly get control of your gender pay gap story and narrative in three simple steps. Not only do we take most of grunt work off your hands, but our work for you is guideline by quite possibly the largest independent analysis of WGEA data in addition to the only analysis we know of into the actual 2000+ employer statement links.



### *“control the narrative of your gender pay gap story in three easy steps”*

With our new service **perple ESP**, we share the wisdom gained from analysing all the employer statement links already uploaded to the WGEA Portal to design a best-fit Employer Statement as a living document that can grow over time with the option for periodic updates to convey your organisations gender gap journey both now and into the future.



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