For decades, the only tools companies had to address bias and discrimination were unconscious bias or diversity training. But after decades of use, we now see that these tools are far from sufficient.

In response, TIME’S UP Foundation and nonprofit behavioral design firm ideas42 released research that introduces a behavioral science approach to building equitable workplaces. The report, *From Ideal Worker to Ideal Workplace: Using Behavioral Design to Create More Equitable Companies*, is designed to help employers reimagine their role in creating more fair and dignified workplaces for all.
As a first illustration of this new approach, we tackled the persistent existence of the gender wage gap in the United States, over a half century since the passage of the Equal Pay Act. Below are actionable steps employers can leverage right away to close the pay gap and improve their workplaces:

▸ Remove restrictions on discussing salary with coworkers. A lack of transparency or even outright warnings against discussing salaries prevent women from identifying discrimination so they can resolve it.

▸ Ban questions about previous salary and salary expectations during interviews with potential new hires. Banning the practice has already been shown to help close the wage gap in starting salaries, notably for women of color.

▸ Give employees more control over their schedules. More control over scheduling can significantly reduce burnout and ameliorate work-family conflict, especially for women.

▸ Standardize interview questions and order. Setting clear and consistent evaluation criteria and pre-determined, pre-ordered interview questions has been shown to increase the likelihood of women receiving senior leadership roles.

▸ Implement gender-neutral paid family and medical leave policies. Paid family and medical leave policies—which provide employees with a number of days that they can use to care for a new child, an ill family member, or to address another health issue—are a proven tool to help women stay in the paid workforce.

▸ Set explicit diversity goals and dedicate resources to the cause. The policies with the strongest track record for increasing diversity at organizations are affirmative action and the creation of diversity task forces because they establish organizational responsibility for hiring and promotion outcomes.

Learn more about applying behavioral science strategies to your workplace by downloading our full report [here](#).