

**How to Unlock Success
in Recruiting and Retaining
Female Drivers**



There is a reported shortage of 80,000 professional drivers – an all-time high that could reach 160,000 by 2030, according to the American Trucking Associations.

A massive opportunity to remedy a severe driver shortage

As of 2022, there is a reported shortage of 80,000 professional drivers – an all-time high and further, we will have a turnover of over 1,000,000 drivers by 2030, according to the American Trucking Associations (ATA).

To get ahead of this issue, it is time to devise solutions to fix the driver shortage. So, what can be done to recruit new drivers successfully? The answer lies in broadening the talent search to new demographics, focusing on inclusivity, and understanding how to resonate with drivers of varying backgrounds— particularly when considering women applicants.

As it stands, less than 10% of truck drivers are women. Targeting women to join the trucking industry as drivers could minimize the shortfall, but this means companies will need to take a proactive approach to execute their recruitment strategy to connect with women and keep them engaged in the job long-term.

TransForce, a leading provider for CDL Driver marketing, recruitment, staffing and retention solutions, has teamed up with the Women In Trucking Association (WIT) to conduct a survey, benchmarking and exploring the recruiting experience of female professional truck drivers.

In this whitepaper, essential research initiatives and key comparative insights from TransForce's 2022 Driver Insights report are outlined, which covers:

- Areas of interest and concern for female professional driver applicants, including what can be done to help women drivers manage life on the road.
- What are the most important benefits when choosing a truck driving job, and what type of information do they expect to see on a job posting as compared to their male counterparts?
- What driver applicants look for in a job search platform (i.e., job search websites, mobile apps, etc.)
- Insights on the experiences professional drivers have when seeking a new job opportunity.

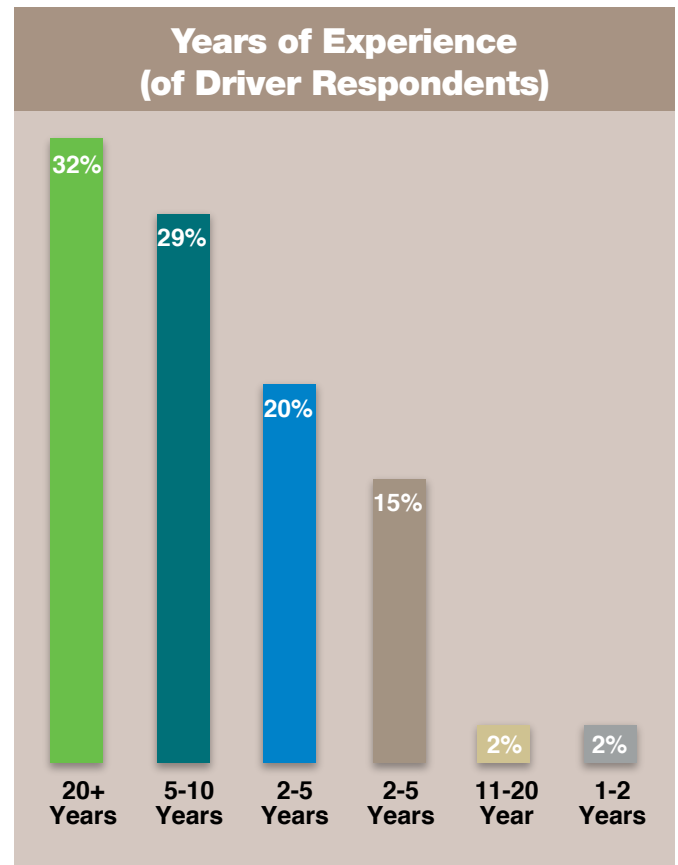
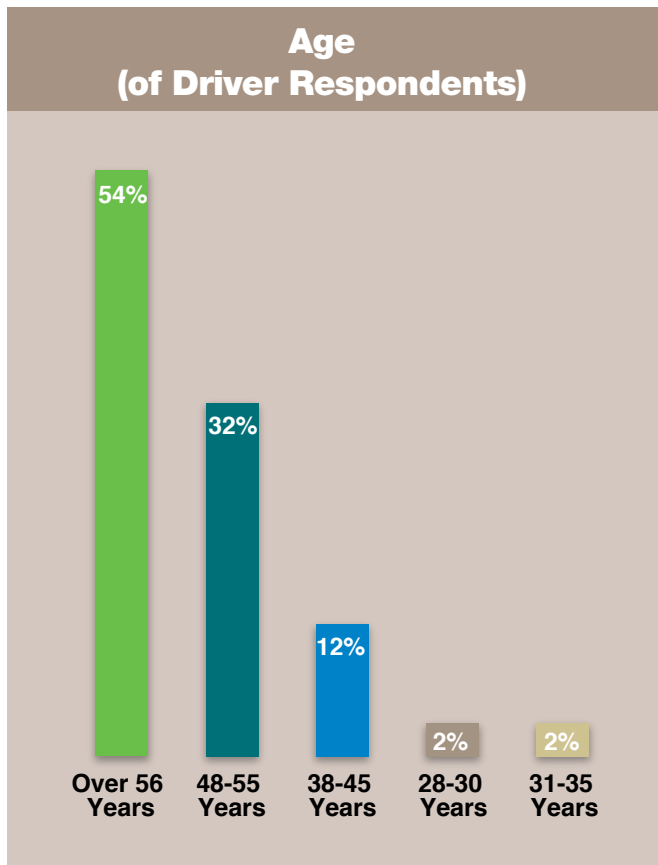


Demographics of Respondents

The age demographic of those participating in this research initiative reflects the general age demographics of the current professional driver population. The average age of over-the-road (OTR) truck drivers is 46, and the average age of new drivers just beginning their careers in the industry is 35, according to ATA.

Of the respondents in this research project, 53.8 percent are over 55 years of age, and another 32.3 percent are 46 to 55 years of age. In addition, 10.7 percent are 36 to 45 years of age.

The level of experience corresponds directly with the age demographic. A significant percentage of respondents (32.3 percent) are seasoned professional drivers with more than 20 years of experience. Another 29.3 percent have 5 to 10 years of experience. Approximately 15.3 percent of participants have 11 to 20 years' of experience, while approximately 29.2 percent have only two to five years experience.



What Female Professional Drivers Care About



As you might expect, the survey concluded that women want similar things as men regarding job benefits like pay, employer respect, work-life balance, etc. However, the main difference employers should keep in mind is that although at the core of the job, men and women have similar values, attracting and retaining women require different strategies.

The most important factors for women who are professional truck drivers tend to be:

- **Pay** (75.3 percent)
- **Company reputation** (43 percent)
- **Flexibility in schedule** (27.6 percent)
- **Type of job** - local, regional, over-the-road, etc. (28.1 percent)
- **Health benefits** (21.5 percent)

Companies most successful in attracting female drivers and retaining their entire driver workforce intentionally address these concerns head-on in their recruiting and retention strategies.

Ensure pay is at or above average a professional driving roles.

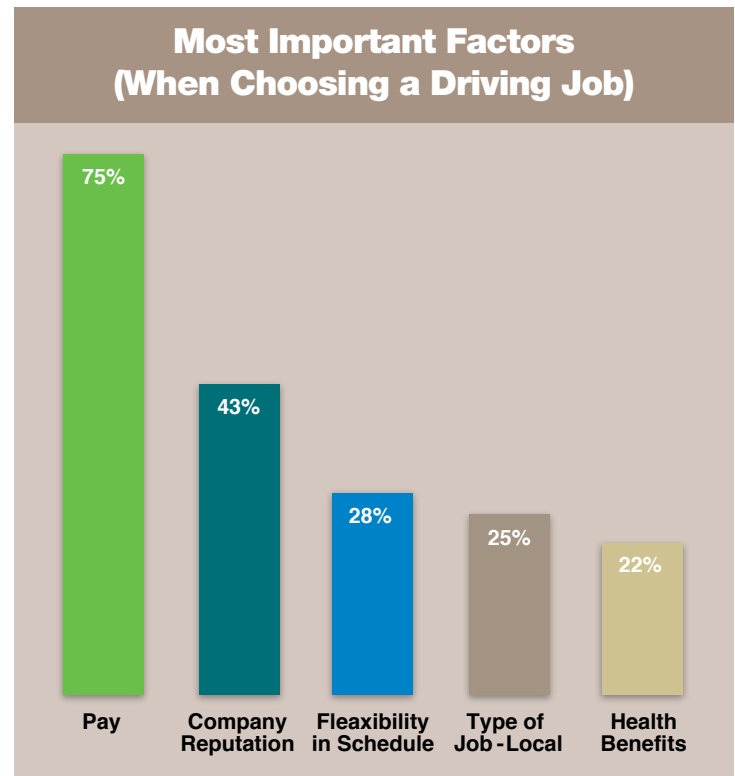
The median income for a truckload driver in 2021 was \$69,000 – an 18% increase from ATA’s previous survey in 2019. Over-the-road pay at LTL fleets (up 2.6% overall) reached \$73,000, while LTL drivers on local routes were paid an estimated median of \$55,000 last year. Truckload carriers paid an average of \$65,000 annually in high-touch final mile applications. Private carriers paid their employee drivers an estimated median amount of \$85,000 last year, the same value reported in 2019.

Create a reputation as a good company to drive for.

Given that company reputation is vital to female professional driver applicants, there are several industry recognition programs that spotlight reputable companies - including “Top Companies for Women to Work for in Transportation” by *Redefining the Road*, the official magazine of WIT. Also, drivers who appreciate your organization become the best recruiting tools. Finally, create testimonials that emphasize why your organization is a solid company to drive for.

Offer flexibility in schedules and routes.

Women drivers, particularly, appreciate flexibility and predictability in their work schedules, particularly if they have families. TransForce’s research found that 67% of women are likely to prefer a platform that helps them view jobs that meet their scheduling preferences, compared to just 41% of men. As a result, the companies that are most successful at recruiting candidates are very intentional in providing work-life balance and flexibility to accommodate their professional drivers.



Why Female Drivers Leave Companies

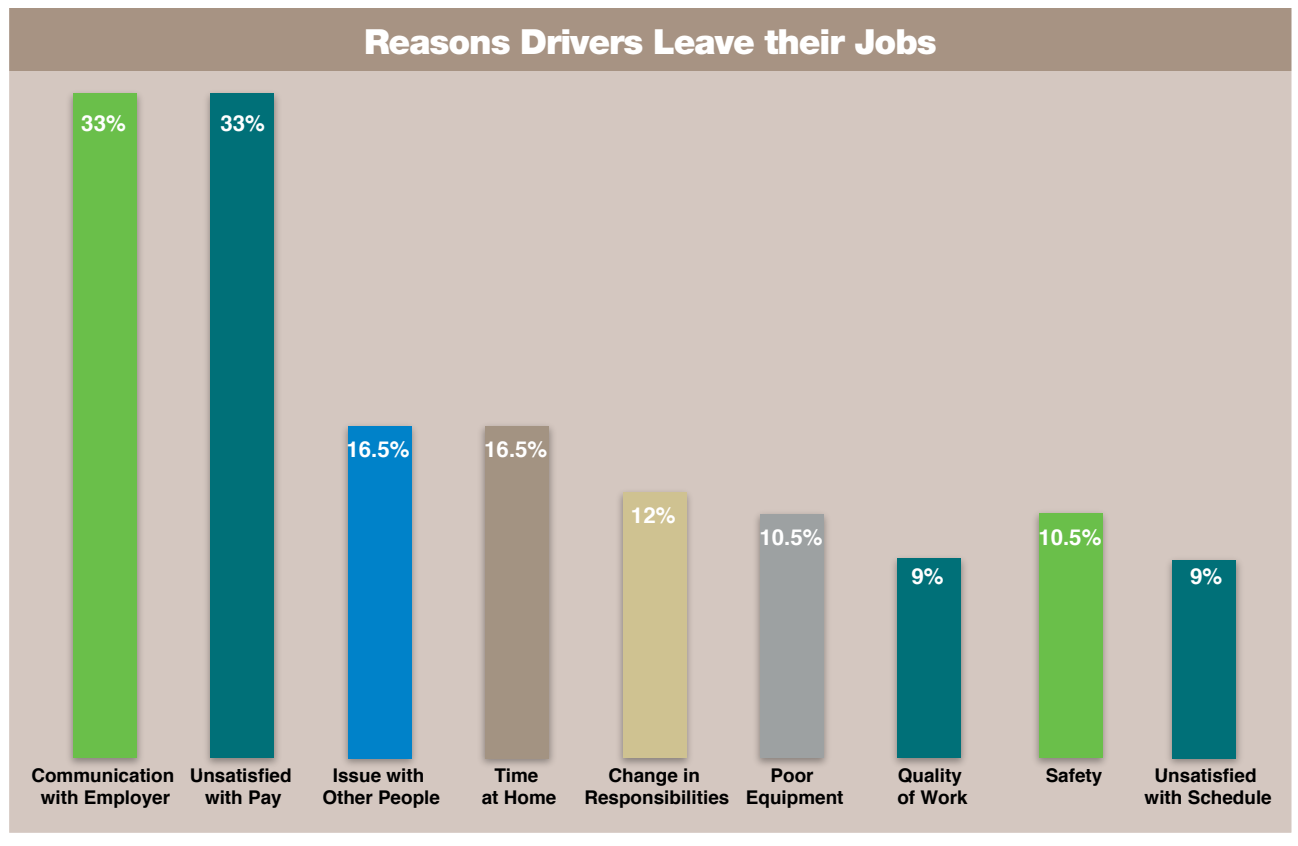
Of course, with the current driver shortage, companies place significant energy and resources toward retention. Understanding what keeps drivers satisfied and employed with your company is critical to informing your retention strategy.

This survey uncovered that are several reasons why female professional drivers leave their positions, like:

- **Poor communication with their employer** (30.7 percent)
- **Dissatisfaction with pay** (30.7 percent).
- **Issues with others at the company** (16.9 percent)
- **Time at home** (16.9 percent)

These findings align with TransForce's recent survey, where 700+ drivers stated pay (28 percent), schedule (20 percent), and time at home (16 percent) were the top reasons they left a previous position.

Additional reasons cited to leave jobs were related heavily to factors that are directly connected to the nature of the specific job they're in, including significant changes in the tasks performed on the job (12.3 percent), changes in touch/no touch and scheduling, poor equipment (10.7 percent), quality of work (9.2 percent), safety (9.2 percent), and dissatisfaction with the schedule (7.6 percent).





Best Practices for Recruiting Women into Trucking

Before implementing new recruitment tactics, understand how to appeal to women drivers' wants and needs. Explore the question "how do women seek new career opportunities?" with your teams to help guide you in positioning your recruitment efforts accurately.

Here are some distinct areas of interest for female drivers:

- Companies that explicitly express a clear desire to hire women
- Demonstrated dedication to a safe work environment
- Equipment and a work environment that is clean and well maintained
- Focus on a culture that welcomes a diverse set of drivers, including women

First, affirm that your organization aligns with the above; does your organization meet support these areas of interest, or is there work to do internally?

Getting your organization to align with the above initiatives is critical. Once more women join your team, these factors will encourage them to stay with your organization now and in the future.

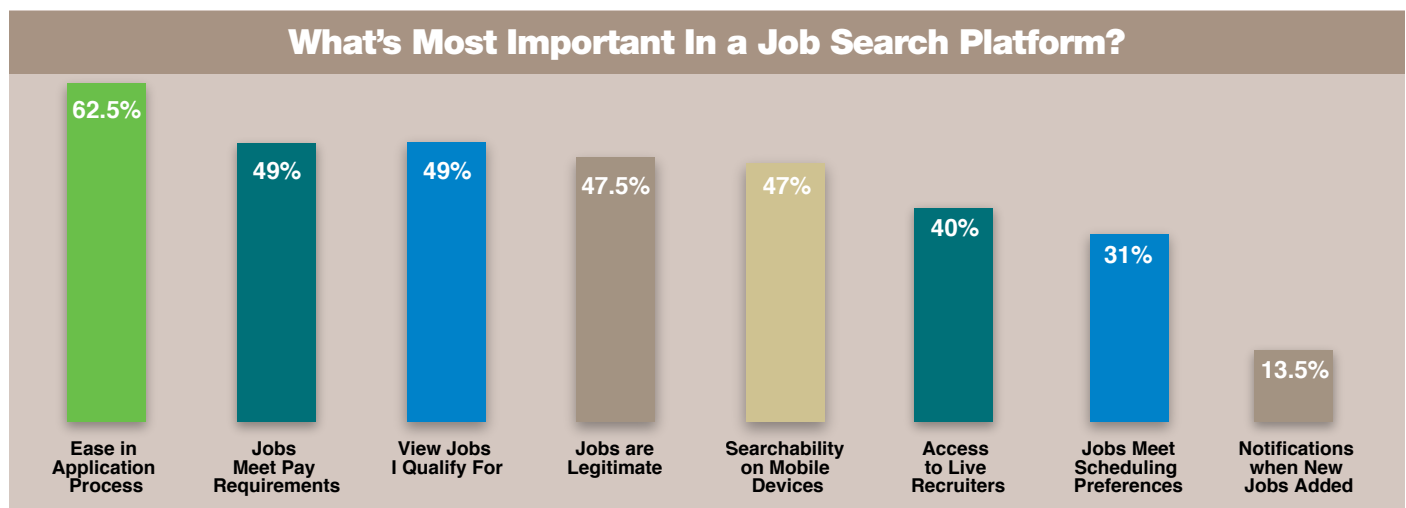
Recruiting Tactics That Resonate with Female Drivers

As discussed, at most fundamentals level, men and women want similar benefits from their work, but how can companies present themselves to appeal to women candidates?

First, it's important to meet prospective drivers where they are. One specific way employers can be more strategic and nimbler is to post their available positions on job boards and websites that specifically target their desired demographic, which in this case is women.

How do driver prospects choose the job search platform they use (i.e., job search websites or mobile apps)? When asked what the most important thing they look for when seeking a new truck driving job, survey participants said:

- **The ease of completing the application process** (63 percent)
- **The ability to easily view jobs that they qualify for** (49.2 percent)
- **Being able to search on their phone** (47.8 percent)
- **Applicants also want to be able to have live conversations with a recruiter** (40 percent)





Once you've determined the Job Search Platforms to use, you also need to be strategic about the information you include on each job posting based on the unique needs of that job and the candidates you're seeking.

When asked, "What type of information do female professional truck drivers want to see on a job posting?" respondents said:

- **Details involving the route type** ((72.3 percent)
- **Critical factors like health benefits offered** (61.5 percent)
- **Types of endorsements required** (58.4 percent)
- **Type of CDL required** (52.3 percent)
- **Company rating by other drivers** (50.77 percent)
- **Equipment type used** (50.7 percent)

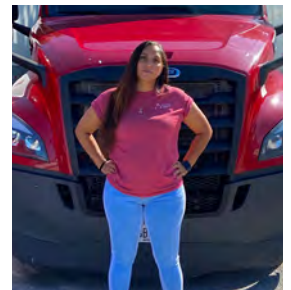
Additional information about the career opportunity that is important to applicants include is weekly pay rate (49.2 percent), work hours (41.5 percent), and recruiter name and contact information (40 percent). Including these key components in your job postings reflect what's most important to your driver candidates. Finally, when creating your job posting keep in mind, "What in it for them?" and ensure to lay out specific details and requirements of the job.

Comparatively, according to respondents of the TransForce survey, drivers want to see weekly pay rates (61 percent), work hours (60 percent), and route type (60 percent) listed on job postings.

So how can you implement these learnings immediately in your recruitment efforts? Here are a few ways companies present themselves to appeal to women candidates:

- Publicly highlight your safety culture
- Highlight women drivers in advertisements, website, and marketing materials
- Use inclusive language in job postings
- Clearly communicate a desire to hire women in ad copy
- Promote the type of equipment offered with an emphasis on it being cleaned and well-maintained

Lastly, companies looking to attract and recruit qualified female driver candidates successfully should ensure their processes are as efficient and enjoyable to the candidate as possible – from the time they search the internet through to the application process and, ultimately, the interviewing and selection process.

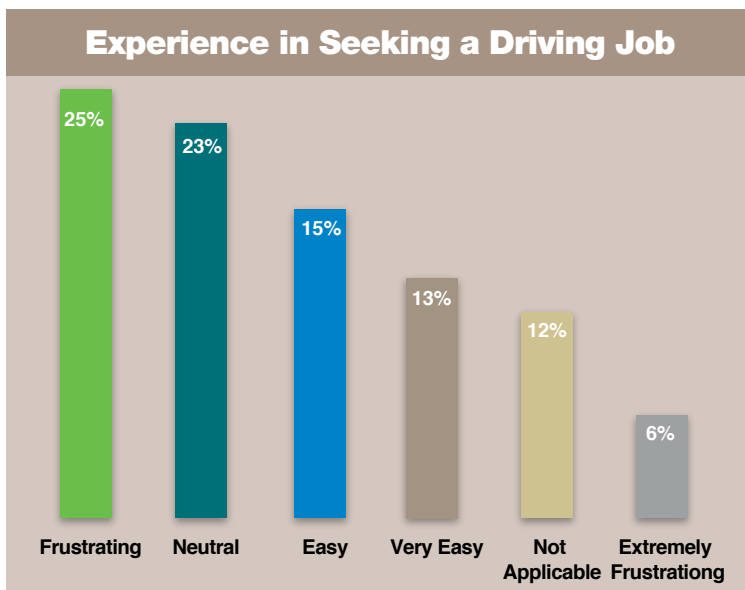


Experiences Matter

When searching for a CDL truck driving job in the past, only one-third of driver respondents (30.7 percent) described their experience as “easy” or “very easy.” While a significant percentage (26.1 percent) described their job search experience as “frustrating,” another 6.1 percent described their experience as “extremely frustrating.”

This also held true for TransForce’s research, with 25 percent of the drivers TransForce surveyed reported feeling frustrated or extremely frustrated about their past job searches. Women, in particular, are more likely to have found past job searches frustrating (31 percent frustrated vs. 24 percent among men).

If you place significant thought and energy toward thinking about your entire application process – to ensure the experience is as positive as possible for your candidates – you’ll achieve better success in your driver recruiting and retention efforts.



Some key ways to improve the employee experience are to:

- Be forthcoming and transparent regarding job details
- Communicate the required credentials for the job
- Connect with applicants for a swift follow-up and outline the next steps
- Stay in touch with applicants throughout the interview and hiring process

Taking the time to engage with applicants actively will make them feel respected and confident to work with your company, boosting overall satisfaction and encouraging them to stay on throughout the process.

Final Thoughts and Takeaways

The most apparent observation from the research collected by WIT and TransForce is that the job search preferences of both male and female professional drivers are comparable in every category. To attract and retain the best drivers, employers must consider what each demographic needs and adjust their recruiting practices accordingly. From utilizing user-friendly job boards to ensuring pay rates are competitive and detailed in each posting — companies must make the job search experience efficient and enjoyable to maximize their success rate for recruiting top driver talent.

3 Ways to Recruit Better

1. Meet applicants where they are and tailor your job posting to include critical details they want to know!
2. Leverage industry-specific recognition programs to showcase your company as a top organization to drive for and establish a solid reputation where your drivers become ambassadors.
3. Offer flexibility in schedules and routes to cater to the various lifestyles of all drivers.

The most jarring information uncovered in the research shows that female truck drivers have serious concerns regarding the perception of their capabilities as a driver compared to their male counterparts (61 percent), safety training (57 percent), and health benefits (34 percent).

“More opportunity and respect for women because there is discrimination for being a woman sometimes.”

“Men ask - directly or indirectly - how many miles am I getting, as if I am the low bar or something; also, companies should encourage mentorship from woman to woman.”

It is no secret that stigma has overshadowed the trucking industry and other traditionally male-dominated industries, such as construction, that the profession is solely for men.

Research shows that female drivers are incredibly safe and conscientious drivers. According to the American Transportation Research Institute, women are 71 percent less likely to have a reckless or negligent driving conviction than men.

Despite the stigma, women are continuing to pursue careers in trucking. Still, it is critical for carriers and males in the industry to help debunk these claims and highlight the significant contributions women bring to the trucking industry, and welcome women to the profession with open arms.

Safety Concerns

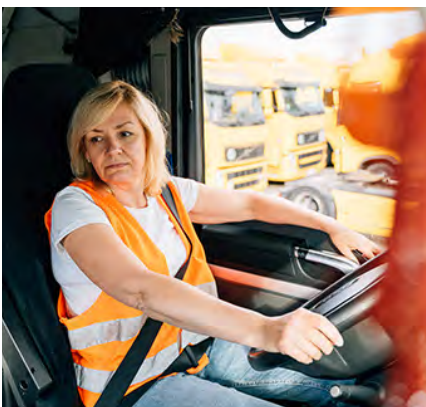
Improved safety measures and training are also a top concern of professional female truck drivers. For example, 71 percent of women respondents stated that they would like better safety measures at truck stops.

Safety is not proprietary to a company or gender. As an industry, we need to work collaboratively to improve safety conditions for all drivers, especially for female drivers currently working in the profession and those considering a career in trucking. In addition to actively recruiting female drivers, carriers should consider hiring more female trainers and instructors who can speak firsthand about the additional safety precautions female drivers should take while crossing the road.

The number of professional female drivers continues to grow, which is promising for an industry that an overall driver shortage has challenged. Ensuring competitive pay and benefits, prioritizing safety, and offering schedule flexibility will be the key to attracting and retaining female drivers for your fleet.

“Create a Safe Zone button on the light poles in the parking areas of truck stops and rest areas. If we feel unsafe or like we are being followed, we can hit the buttons as we move through the lots.”

“There are unspoken rules about not parking at fuel pumps during quick stops at a truck stop for restroom breaks/purchases. Women should be allowed to do this for stops less than 30 minutes at night to avoid walking between trailers in dark parking areas across a long distance.”





About TransForce

TransForce is the leader in CDL driver solutions. For more than 30 years, TransForce has been perfecting and innovating the driver's employment journey: from obtaining a CDL license and securing the first job, to the very last mile.

TransForce takes its expertise to market in the form of tech enabled and efficient CDL driver recruitment and staffing solutions powered by a network of 1.8 million drivers. More than 3,000 carriers nationwide choose TransForce as a partner for their driver recruitment and staffing. For more information, visit www.transforce.com

About the Women In Trucking Association

Women In Trucking Association (WIT) is a nonprofit association established to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments and minimize obstacles faced by women working in the trucking industry. Membership is not limited to women, as 17 percent of its members are men who support the mission. WIT is supported by its members and the generosity of Gold Level Partners: Amazon, Arrow Truck Sales, Daimler Truck North America, Expediter Services, FedEx Freight, Great Dane, J.B. Hunt Transport, Michelin North America, PACCAR, Penske Transportation Solutions, Ryder System, Walmart, and Waste Management. For more information, visit www.womenintrucking.org or call 888-464-9482.



The Women In Trucking Association (WIT) is America's leading industry association for women in the trucking industry. With nearly 7,000 members in 10-plus countries around the world, the mission of WIT is to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments, and minimize obstacles they face.

