



eowa employer of choice for women 2003 organisational profile



IBM Australia Ltd.

EOWA asked IBM Australia Ltd., to explain some of their initiatives and workplace programs instigated to achieve equal opportunity in the organisation, and why they are committed to being an 'EOWA Employer of Choice for Women' (EOCFW).

Organisation Information

INDUSTRY SECTOR	=	Computer Consultancy
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	=	10 000
% OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES	=	32%
% OF FEMALE SENIOR MANAGEMENT	=	23%

Q Why are you committed to becoming an EOCFW?

Diversity and inclusion have been integral parts of the IBM corporate culture for more than 80 years. IBM values diversity and recognises the need to capitalise on the skills and talents of all segments of its workforce. Valuing this difference in IBM uncovers new perspectives, taps different knowledge and experience, and generates ideas, suggestions and methods not otherwise considered. We recognise that diversity is a key point of competitive leverage for the company, and as such want to ensure that our workforce reflects the population.

We want to be an EOWA 'Employer of Choice for Women' because we know we will:

1. Gain competitive advantage through attracting and retaining the best people. Women make up half of the population, and as such it would be missed opportunity to not include this proportion of the marketplace in our workforce.
2. Increase business effectiveness. We seek to provide a balanced approach to decision making with the range of expertise contributing to the most balanced and effective decisions. This includes the ability to work as One Team where diversity of experience and thought enables us to bring the best solutions to our customers.
3. Serve our customers through greater understanding. Ensuring that IBM has a workforce that reflects the population enables the organisation to better understand and respond to the needs of all customers.

Q What did you do?

IBM has long been actively engaged - at the corporate and industry levels - in encouraging women to enter the IT industry. This is not just because there are skills shortages in the Information Technology and Communications industries - though this is reason enough.

Our internal programs are about motivating and retaining women. Our external programs focus on exposing women to IT and encouraging them to choose IT as a career.

Internal IBM Programs for Women

- IBM Australia and New Zealand Women's Conference - Sydney 2002



eowa employer of choice for women 2003 organisational profile

The Conference was held at the Sydney Convention Centre and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour. Participants were selected by IBM's General Manager's to cover the full cross section of women within IBM.

There were two major themes for the Conference titled Balancing our Challenges -career development and work/life balance - two areas that are of primary interest to many women in IBM. Over 300 women attended this event.

- Top Steps

Top Steps is a 13-part course focused on personal and career development, and is provided by Waite Consulting - each year we ask IBM's Business Unit leaders to nominate high potential middle level women. From those nominations we select four to attend the Top Steps course.

- Diversity networking events

Networking events are held in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Adelaide each year. These events are open to all employees and cover themes such as the advancement of women, work/life balance, integration of people with a disability and cultural awareness and acceptance. The events provide employees with an opportunity to hear about best practices, and how to apply them in the workplace, as well as provide an opportunity for networking with other employees.

- Women in IT program (WIT)

This group was created to engage the female technology community within IBM, supporting the unique challenges facing technical women in today's society. To achieve this, IBM's WIT programs concentrate on three areas - technical women, mentoring, and reaching down to young girls to fill the pipeline.

The group provides opportunities for our technical women to network, actively profiles our women from many different areas, facilitates discussion on common issues, provides technical information, and links our women to the global IBM WIT network.

- Development of flexible workplace practices that support the advancement of women

- flexible working arrangements including part-time and job share, access to single days annual leave, flexible work week, time off in lieu, flexible start and finish times, hours may be negotiated by employees, and telecommuting
- flexible leave including exam and study leave, religious observance leave, leave of absence, personal work/life leave
- paid maternity leave
- paid paternity leave
- paid adoption leave
- parenting rooms (for expressing milk and breast feeding)
- Preparing to Return to Work from Parental Leave seminars
- Blue Horizons – Life Style program
- Get Balanced program
- Employee Assistance Program

External IBM Programs for Women



eowa employer of choice for women 2003 organisational profile

- The School Speakers Program - IBM promotes careers in IT and engineering to female high school students by sponsoring and participating in the School Speakers Program at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne and the University of Technology in Sydney. Offering talks by teams of female IBM Associates and University students, the program reaches 3,000 high school girls every year. During the sessions, the speakers also answer questions about university and life after school.
- The EXITE program - summer camps in NSW and in Victoria are held to encourage young women to study and pursue careers in IT. The camp encourages young women to study and pursue careers in IT, giving them access to a panel of leading women at IBM and from across the IT industry. During the week, participants learn about new technology and work in teams to design and build their own websites.

Q How did you make it happen?

I believe that some of the success factors are:

- Inspiring a vision of the desired and end state through the communication of the business case for the advancement of women, and through the creation of a Diversity Council which is representative of our constituencies, including women.
- Actively demonstrating support for the program – IBM's CEO chairs the Diversity Council.
- Creation of a philosophy that guides our business, and policies and systems that support managers in running the business.
- Creation of measurable strategies to evaluate success, i.e. gender targets to measure the employee population, progress to senior management roles, and development opportunities.
- Regular communication of the expectations held of people and what these initiatives mean to them.
- Encouragement of and participation in the various programs, and actively seeking participation in the process as early as possible (for example, the Diversity Council is representative of the various constituencies within our business, our Diversity Contact Officer Program, engaging our Diversity Networking Groups – for example, our WIT group, our part-time/job –share group). Enlist early adopters' active support in moving sceptics to accept change.
- Publicly reward behaviours that support the change effort. Celebrate small "wins" that move the organisation forward (i.e. Diversity Champion Awards).
- Creating ongoing momentum – through top down and bottom up support (i.e. line managers, regular communication of progress and programs, recognition of people in our business who exemplify the behaviours that are important to us in the advancement of diversity initiatives).
- Gain feedback - continually solicit feedback on problems and ideas for resolution (for example, our diversity networking groups).

Q What were the challenges you had to overcome? How did you overcome them?

Managing return to work from parental leave - one of the challenging aspects of managing parental leave is finding a working solution when the person returns to work. Often, but not always, mothers would like to stagger their return to full-time, work more flexibility - this could mean different hours or different times.

IBM encourages part time work and job sharing, and has recently conducted job share workshops throughout the business, to promote the use of these flexible workplace practices. In fact 12.9% of our female workforce currently works part time.



eowa employer of choice for women 2003 organisational profile

We encourage managers and employees to stay in touch while the employee is on parental leave. We have introduced a "Return to Work from Parental Leave Seminar" which aims to prepare people for their entry back into the workforce by developing a child, personal and career strategy. Employees also have access to a Family CareLink Service that provides information to employees on child care options to assist the employee in managing their

child care arrangements while transitioning back to work.

IBM currently has a 97% return to work rate from maternity leave.

- Creation of a culture that supports work/life balance

Our solution:

- Step 1 – Creation of a philosophy and a culture that supports work/life balance

Employees must take responsibility for their own work/life balance needs.

- Work / life balance should have a positive impact on all involved
- Quality of output is more important than the amount of activity
- Teams are flexible when balancing working and personal needs
- Employees are treated as individuals
- Ongoing performance and contribution are a prerequisite
- Achieving work / life balance is hard work and ongoing
- Step 2 – Development of policies and practices that support the philosophy - IBM underpins its work/life balance vision by providing principles, policies and programs to support employees. Some examples are:
 - Flexible working arrangements including part-time and job share, access to single days annual leave, flexible work week, time off in lieu, flexible start and finish times, hours may be negotiated by employees, and telecommuting
 - Flexible leave including exam and study leave, religious observance leave, leave of absence, personal work/life leave
 - Floating Cultural Holiday
 - Paid maternity leave
 - Paid paternity leave
 - Paid adoption leave
 - Parenting rooms (for expressing milk and breast feeding)
 - Preparing to return to work from parental leave seminars
 - Blue Horizons – lifestyle program
 - Men@work program
 - Employee Assistance Program
- Step 3 - Embed the philosophy and the practices within the culture. We implemented a Get Balanced Program which provides managers and employees with frameworks for implementing flexibility into their team. Company-wide workshops are available for managers to help individuals and teams review their work and personal goals and create the best support structures to achieve work/life balance.

Q What impact has it had on the business and on the women in the organisation?

IBM Australia conducts an annual employee satisfaction survey. The results from the latest employee survey are:

- 10% increase in people who believe that their job does not have a significant impact on their ability to balance work and personal / family life.



eowa employer of choice for women 2003 organisational profile

- Almost 30% of employees found it easier to manage work and family life.
- More than 50% of employees now work from home for at least four hours a week during regular office hours.
- A 75% increase in part-time work.

In IBM's Global Worklife Survey, conducted in 2001, it was found that those with work/life difficulty compared to those without work/life difficulty reported greater job satisfaction (83% vs. 64%)