



eowa employer of choice for women 2003 organisational profile



Household & Body Care

Sara Lee Household & Body Care

EOWA asked Sara Lee Household & Body Care, 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	=	Manufacturing
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	=	218
% OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES	=	58.9%
% OF FEMALE SENIOR MANAGEMENT	=	33.3%

Q Why are you committed to becoming an EOCFW?

Sara Lee Household & Body Care truly believe in a culture of equality. Our business objectives for becoming an EOCFW include:

- To attract and retain an even greater number of talented people.
- To reflect our changing customer based.
- To assist in generating a wider range of new ideas and perspectives.

We basically believe that by becoming an EOCFW we can become a more successful organisation through valuing the differences between our employees and by allowing our employees to be their best.

Q What did you do?

- Took aboard some learning's from overseas operating companies.
- Ensure that we actually knew what our employees wanted from a diversity program.
- Took an consultative approach.
- We implemented a diversity team and refreshed the diversity team to respond to changing work demands.

Q How did you make it happen?

We empowered our diversity team by:

- Allowing them access to their own funding.
- Supported reporting to the executive board to highlight areas of improvement.
- Encouraged the team to communicate constantly with the wider workforce all aspects of diversity, what programs were successful, what programs were not. We believe this over communication gave the employees a sense of ownership over their diversity.



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

- Measures. The team learnt the hard way that they have to measure everything. All initiatives are now measured in order to provide the business with a strong case for continuing with various programs.
- Department Specific. Due to operational demands it was more difficult for some departments to fully embrace all our diversity programs. We took a two prong approach and asked our diversity team members to understand the business needs of these departments and for the departments to support the objectives of the diversity initiative.
- Business Environment. Business got tough and to help keep the focus on diversity we started to ensure at each company wide communication diversity was put on the agenda.
- Communication. It became difficult to make diversity sound 'fresh' so we got some of our brilliant marketers into the team and 'picked their brains' about how to 'sell' a idea.

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

It has impacted our bottom line clearly by helping the company retain valuable talent. It has also has great effect on our ability to recruit outstanding candidates. Ever time the company appears in print we receive a flood of job enquiries, many from seriously talented people who tell us time and time again that they want to work for an employee who values them as people.