

Corrs Chambers Westgarth

A passionate CEO

Corrs CEO, John Denton, is a passionate advocate of the progress of women in the workplace. This is demonstrated through his support of women in promotion committees that are responsible for career advancement, his addresses to staff, his comments in the public press, and his commitment to our continued improvement as an inspiring place to work.

It's about merit and performance

Corrs has a merit-based approach to remuneration, incentives, and promotion decisions. All of these decisions are based on an employee's contribution, regardless of gender.

- 25% of our most senior staff are women (Senior Executive Team – 27% women, Operating Committee – 20% women, Board – 25% women).
- The average salary for women in legal staff is higher than the average salary for men.
- Corrs introduced a High Performance Incentive Plan that gives **all** employees the opportunity to earn up to a further 5-15% of their salary depending on their level in the firm and the quality of their contribution.

Flexibility in work practices and careers

Flexible work practices are a normal part of our working arrangements. We offer part-time working, job sharing and extended leave, and provide tools to support this such as remote access, and Blackberrys for senior support managers, senior associates and partners.

- Over **15%** of Corrs' workforce is part-time, demonstrating the popularity of this option, including 13 men.

We offer flexible career paths which include international internships, secondments, in-house special counsel roles, and inter-office and practice group transfers.

- **59%** (16) of secondments were granted to females.
- Corrs International Internship Program provides the opportunity to travel and work with leading law firms overseas. Arrangements for two internships to Japan and Singapore were finalised in 2006; both candidates were women.

We offer **industry-leading** parental leave provisions.

- Corrs offers 14 weeks paid parental leave for those employees with 18 months service and who are the primary care-giver and two weeks paid leave for the non-primary care-giver

Engagement and a commitment to change

"Listening to our people" is an important part of our success.

- Corrs conducts an annual employee satisfaction survey, quarterly "pulse check" surveys, an intranet discussion forum and an anonymous suggestion box where all contributions receive a written response.
- In 2006, we conducted eight focus group sessions to uncover issues and identify better ways to address concerns and barriers for women in the workplace.

One of the strong messages to emerge from listening to our people is the importance of fostering gender diversity, addressing career path hurdles for women at Corrs and facilitating a full range of flexible working arrangements.

- A Diversity Council has been established to drive improved performance in gender diversity. The Council is developing and implementing diversity initiatives using extensive research by two consulting firms who conducted focus groups with senior females and broader cross-sections of the firm across both genders and all national offices.
- A Diversity Partner, Christine Covington, has been appointed to champion diversity at Corrs. Christine is also a Board member.
- Pilot seminars and workshops have been held on the subject of "progression to partnership" for female senior associates and a pilot seminar is scheduled for both genders on "positive parenting."

Building successful careers

Our people are supported by a range of career progression policies and programs, including an extensive learning and development program.

- Executive Coaching is available to senior women within the firm.
- Legal Career Path Guidelines promote the inclusion of women by ensuring that career progression is transparent and fair.
- Corrs Scholarship for Individual Excellence Program provides **all** employees with the chance to further their careers by developing stronger professional skills and deeper business knowledge by attending short training courses at prestigious institutions such as Harvard and Oxford. In 2006, **63%** of the scholarship recipients were female.
- Online learning is available at Corrs, providing further opportunities for flexible learning options.

Media Talent:

Kylie McPherson, Senior Associate

Kylie is a Senior Associate in Corrs Corporate Advisory practice group, specialising in private company mergers & acquisitions and general corporate advisory work. Kylie recently worked on Mirvac's \$1.1 billion purchase of Walker Corporation's property assets, which was completed in early January 2007.

Benefits from Corrs EO initiatives and programs

- Employed to work four days a week in the office. Kylie has maintained her transactional workload while employed on this basis over the last six years. This has been assisted by use of a BlackBerry and access via Citrix to the Corrs server from her home computer.
- Promoted to Senior Associate in 2001 while on a six month leave of absence to work and play in the ski fields of Colorado.
- Taken two periods of parental leave during her time at Corrs, returning to work on a part-time basis after each such period.
- One of three Corrs lawyers seconded to Amcor Limited in Melbourne, Victoria in 2006. During this secondment, Kylie worked from the Corrs Sydney office, giving advice and legal assistance by telephone and email to Amcor Limited employees based in Victoria.
- Mentor to two female graduate lawyers in the Corporate Advisory practice group.
- Mentored by a female partner of the firm.
- Awarded a Corrs Scholarship for Excellence in 2006 to travel to Henley Management College (UK) in July 2007 to participate in their one week "Developing Leaders" program.

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Fiona McGauchie, Senior Associate

Fiona joined Corrs in December 2006 as a Senior Associate in the Melbourne Corporate Advisory practice group and specialises in mergers and acquisitions and general commercial matters. Before joining Corrs, Fiona worked for the Linfox Group as in-house counsel and in a senior project management and strategy role. Fiona currently works four days per week.

Benefits from the Corrs EO initiatives

Fiona was on parental leave after the birth of her first child, Luca, in August 2006, when she decided to make the move to Corrs – a decision she made after much consideration.

"Returning to the paid workforce after parental leave can be daunting for professional women – particularly with your first child.

The big challenge for me was to find a part-time role that matched our child care. Corrs really stood out here – their attitude towards a part-time role was completely positive and very focused on what worked for me.

But flexibility was equally important – when you've always worked full-time and you're new to parenting, it's hard to see how it's all going to work. I needed to be confident that plans could change as we all learnt more about each other and about how to make a part-time role work well for everyone. After three months in the role and three changes to the days and hours I'm in the office, I can confidently say that Corrs' commitment to flexibility is a reality! As a result, my transition back into the paid workforce at Corrs has been a great experience. Initially I started with three days in the office. As more child care became available, I moved to 3.5 days and now four days per week. Being able to work remotely is critical and Corrs was happy to provide a laptop and BlackBerry to make that possible.

One of the most important aspects of any workplace is its culture – particularly the attitudes and norms of the team you work with. The Corrs team has proved to be supportive and understanding – well beyond my expectations. Whether it's a day spent working from home to look after a sick child, or a change in office hours to fit in with an unexpected change in child care, the team at Corrs have been positive, supportive and very understanding. I've also had the great benefit of insight and camaraderie from senior women in the firm through the Corrs Women in Business network.

There are many challenges to face when you work in a professional role while also managing family responsibilities. For me, what makes Corrs a great workplace is the unwavering commitment to making it work, the open communication and an overwhelmingly positive attitude."

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