

## **Benetas**

### Case Studies

#### **Fiona Savedra 'Mum of two working part-time from home'**

Working 10 hours a week in People Development (Human Resources) at Benetas Head office part time from home and the office while looking after two young boys - 5 months and 2 ½ years old. The case study example is a mother returning to the workplace after having two children to illustrate the wealth of transferable skills she brings with her to the workplace and the flexibility of working from home and part-time that Benetas offers.

#### **Amanda Downing 'Flexible working arrangements to study Personal Care'**

8 years ago Amanda started in the laundry and kitchen at Gladswood Lodge. She recently completed her Certificate III in Aged Care and is now a Personal Care Worker.

*"Benetas has provided me with the opportunity and flexible working arrangements to complete my studies and pursue a career path in Personal Care"*

#### **Robin Jewell 'Experienced (Mature age) worker Community services in Rural Victoria**

Winner of Benetas' 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Staff and Volunteer Award "The Archbishop Booth Award" for her extraordinary contribution beyond expectations and role requirements. Robin is a Care Manager in the Grampians and Loddon Mallee Region.

Robin will boldly (but sensibly) go where others might fear to tread, regularly visiting isolated, tumbledown farmhouses at the end of dirt tracks, undeterred by mice or snakes. She has managed to engage with fiercely independent rural people and gently and respectfully encourages them to take up community packages which they agree have been valuable and beneficial to them.

#### **About Benetas' new initiatives as an Employer of Choice for Women**

Benetas sets an industry standard as an Employer of Choice for Women priding itself of innovative and flexible practices for women. Benetas offers female employees of all ages the opportunity to develop their skills and careers. Our attraction and retention strategies specifically target mature women offering them the training and flexibility they need to balance work and family commitments such as caring for grandchildren and older parents. Staff and Managers consistently utilise flexible work practices including flexible rostering, working from home and flexible hours which is actively encouraged by the CEO who manages on performance outcomes generated rather than hours spent in the office.

This year, Benetas has also actively participated in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Experienced Worker Program. Two employees within the Benetas People Development (HR) Department have become Accredited Trainers in the program to promote an understanding and flexibility from Managers / Team Leaders, and awareness amongst staff (and potential staff) of the flexible options available to them.

Our participation in this program was endorsed by the Executive Management team as an initiative that would particularly support the attraction and retention of women employees in the over 45 years category. The internal trainers regularly speak at staff meetings about the program and the key messages about the value of experienced workers.

Over the past 12 months Benetas has undergone significant growth and organisational change with the appointment of 4 new female Executive Managers and the appointment a female into the new role of Risk Manager and promotion of females into key senior roles in Quality, Residential and Community / Direct Care.

During 2007 Benetas appointed Ellen Flint as Executive Manager for Human Resources which was subsequently renamed as People Development, sending a positive message to the staff that the organisation is not just about "Human Resources" but committed to the development and promotion of its staff and fostering an inclusive culture. A succession plan process has since been introduced and supported by a new Performance appraisal process and the re-writing of position descriptions across the organisation. In addition to these initiatives, a 5 year plan presented to the Board focuses on continuing to develop improved outcomes for the organisation and its staff, particularly through Learning and Development and Attraction and Retention initiatives.

Benetas initiatives:

- Allowing flexible start times to accommodate child school drop offs
- Training and meeting times conducted during the hours of 9.30am to 4.30pm to minimise potential conflict of external responsibilities.
- No internal meetings on Fridays.
- Job share and work from home provisions where appropriate.
- Time off to attend IVF appointments
- Introduced the concept and practice of 48/52 flexibility with leave
- Eight weeks paid maternity leave and two weeks paid paternity leave available to all employees, including casual employees.
- Provision and acceptance of children in the workplace.
- Casual, part time and permanent staff are all afforded the same access to training.
- Provision for breast feeding/lactating facilities.
- A self-rostering program – enables workers to choose the shifts that are most aligned to their needs.
- All staff have an individual development plan providing learning opportunities.
- Able to utilise sick leave and carers leave provisions, along with discretionary leave without pay to meet family needs.

**Improved outcomes for women and the business**

	Number of Women	Number of Men
Board and/or Executive Committee	2	8
Executive positions	5	1
Business Management positions	17	10
Facility Manager positions	10	3
Community Care Managers	47	3
Promoted and recruited into senior management positions	6	1
Recruited into non-traditional roles	3	1
Recruited or promoted into line manager roles	7	1
Recruited or promoted into profit centre roles	4	1
Exited the organisation	8	1
Succession Plan	5	1
Have a mentor*	1	1
Senior Managers who work part-time; plus <i>Client Care Managers who work part-time</i>	2 14	0 0

\* At the time of reporting, Benetas has an informal mentoring program which has led to 1 female and 1 male middle manager being provided with mentoring support. However, since the reporting date, a formal mentoring program has been launched within Benetas. It is expected that in February 2008, up to 10 mentors will be trained, and expressions of interest have been called for potential mentees.

Took maternity leave	26
Returned after maternity leave full time	3
Returned after maternity leave part-time	20
Resigned after maternity leave	3