

## Avant Insurance Limited

### Employer of Choice for Women Citation 2009

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Avant has been working steadily towards our FY09 KPI to become an Employer of Choice for the right team. To this end we are pleased to announce that Avant has been awarded the Employer of Choice for Women (EOCFW) citation by the Equal Opportunity for Women Agency.

Avant is Australia's largest medical defence organisation providing medical indemnity insurance and member services to over 40,000 healthcare practitioners. Avant is a mutual, not for profit organisation. Avant has a headcount of 240 employees of whom 70% are female.

Whilst EOWA concentrates on assessing what Avant has done to fully utilise the capability of our female workforce, Avant is of the view that the people policy and practices we have put into place grows the capability of our entire Avant workforce. Some of the policies and practices outlined in support of our application are:

#### **Our Flexible Work Place Culture**

- o Twenty percent (20%) of our total workforce works some type of flexible work arrangement with eighteen percent (18%) being female employees. People Leaders are able to work part time.
- o Avant supports women returning to work from Parental Leave. Our flexible culture has minimised staff turnover with the result that only one woman from 12 decided to resign in the past two years. Ten of these women now work on a part time basis. This achievement supports our other initiatives such as Paid Parental Leave, the Stay in Touch Program and the Priority of Access Agreement with Kids Company (Sydney office).

#### **Our Development Strategy**

- o The targeted development of leadership capability through the introduction of the Leadership AvantEdge Program for our three levels of People Leaders – Executive Team, Functional Leader and Leaders. This program is innovative and includes workshops, 360° feedback, individual and group coaching and a board mentoring program.
- o The Assistance with Studies Program supports employees completing higher education qualifications (FY08 - 10 women and 2 men).
- o Training benchmarks that demonstrate our commitment to ongoing learning and development (FY08 – 39.5 average training hours per employee and \$1505 average training \$\$ per employee). These benchmarks are well in excess of insurance industry best practice.

#### **Our Reward and Remuneration Strategy**

- o An open, consistent and transparent process ensures employees understand that their overall performance rating, job size and salary benchmark data are factored into their remuneration outcome. The process has delivered positive remuneration outcomes where men and women are paid an equivalent salary for work of the same value (eg; no pay equity gap at Functional Leader, Leader or Solicitor salaries).

### **Our Employee Consultation Strategy**

- Multiple forums have been put into place for employees to provide feedback to the CEO and Executive Team. Regular Pulse Checks, the Organisation Cultural Inventory™, focus groups and employee consultative committees eg; Work Life Balance Committee provide opportunities for concerns, needs and wants to be tabled and action plans put into place to address the issues.