



INDIAN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

IBM India initiative towards 'Advancement of Women'

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Preface

At IBM women have been making contributions to the advancement of information technology for almost as long as the company has been in existence. Very early IBM recognised the value women could bring to the business equation. Women who have been IBM employees since the 1930s have built upon that foundation. But of even greater significance is the impact they've had on the information technology industry. That impact has no doubt been farther reaching and more enduring than even a visionary like Watson could have imagined seven decades ago. At IBM, women represent IBM's largest global constituency. IBM's commitment to the advancement of women is apparent in all we do.

Around the world, IBMers are addressing the area of advancement of women. Throughout our various business units, there is active participation in diversity councils and diversity networking groups, networking opportunities, a strong focus on mentoring, attendance at internal and external conferences and symposia, participation on steering committees, enhanced emphasis on executive and technical resources programs, administration of work/personal life employee surveys and diversity-specific hiring programs.

The Advancement of Women is one of seven global diversity imperatives at IBM. For the past four years, IBM has been reporting on the status of Global Workforce Diversity to its Board of Directors, and a key component of the review is the status of women. To ensure each geography and country has focus on the advancement of women; each geography has developed strategies to address the challenges.

IBM India – Focus to Advance the Role of Women in IBM India

Both India and IBM in India are advancing their roles in the global economy. By the end of this decade, India will have more than 21 million college graduates and the second largest pool of scientists and technology professionals of any country in the world. IBM is focused on unleashing the innovative potential of people here, including women talent. As the number of women entering the workforce has increased over the past decades, so has IBM's commitment to understanding their needs and providing services that make it possible for them to be productive while fulfilling family and personal obligations. While IBM is proud of what it has achieved so far, however, its dedication to attracting and retaining its women employees is undiminished.

IWLC

Indian Women's Leadership Council is charged with the mission to drive advancement of women across the organization through a range of programs to Attract, Develop and Retain women. The IWLC has a significant role to play in establishing the case for the advancement of women as a business imperative and ensuring that the programs cascade across a diverse organization. A team of sixteen senior women leaders across Business Units and IBM India locations are members of the council driving initiatives towards advancement of women employees. IWLC's goal is to create an environment and programs so conducive to the needs of women employees that it will continuously attract and retain key talent.

IWLC Mission

- To enhance the technical, professional and personal development of women in IBM India
- To facilitate IBM's commitment to the advancement of women
- To create a vision for women as future leaders

Objectives

The IWLC has created two sub teams, each of which concentrate on creating programs that support the mission.

- The objective of the **Pipeline Team** is to create a pipeline of women leaders by external hiring and internal development.
- The objective of the **Retain Team** is to address causes in the internal and external environment that negatively impact work-life balance and attrition.

Team Initiatives

Attract: Programs are created to increase the focus on women hiring. First by assessing the 'talent need' for each business unit for their requirements on skills and competencies. Second, design programs that are specifically executed at campuses, regular lateral hiring and select positions to bring in women in leadership positions. IWLC members actively participates in recruitment programs targeted at female employees in both our Experienced Professional and College Recruiting Programs. While hiring recent college graduates, India women leaders are present at every campus recruitment program. The goal is to attract and recruit more qualified technical women to IBM India and to enhance IBM's image regarding women in technology.

Another goal in attracting women talent is to build a pipeline of women in technology by encouraging girls to choose science through K-12 and EXITE Camp programs. IBM reaches out to the long-term pipeline of future female technologists by focusing on middle school girls and keeping them interested in math, science, and technology. IWLC facilitates volunteerism among employees to engage with young women and demonstrate that technology and engineering are fun and difference-making careers for women. Key programs supporting this initiative include EXploring Interests in Technology and Engineering (EXITE) Camps and the Global WIT Chapter workshops.

Last but definitely not the least, there has never been a better time for women leaders in IBM India to increase the roles in the company and in society. IWLC's focus has helped in hiring senior women talent at leadership positions.

Develop: Through executive interviews and roundtables, we continue to seek feedback on barriers to the advancement of women in the workplace. IWLC is committed to helping break down barriers that may impede success. Women lack role models, networks and mentors. As one way to address the lack of role models, networking and mentoring opportunities, the women's council, made up of senior women leaders reach out to the other women in their respective locations. IWLC facilitates business units to participate in quarterly networking calls for women which serve to connect communities of women.



IConnect, is an India initiative aimed at helping women employees realize their full potential within the work environment. 'I' implies the individual with her aspirations, her talents and her strengths. 'I' also stands for IBM in India. The importance of networking toward career and personal growth cannot be underestimated.

IConnect aims to foster networking among women employees across IBM in India. IWLC's aim is to expand the IConnect Program and create additional opportunities to inspire women at IBM with female executive role models. Typically these discussions highlight advancement issues and touch on general business items as well.

Extensive mentoring initiatives are available – both formal and informal. IWLC continually encourage women to be a mentor or to get a mentor. IWLC suggests that several mentors be pursued – for various facets of life like skills, job, career, personal and recommends that women seek both male and female mentors. In 2000, a Multicultural Women's leadership program was designed and offered to women further down in the pipeline.

IWLC and WIT: In India technology careers are not attracting enough young people to fill our current and future needs. Most of these these jobs go unfilled due to a lack of qualified workers. IWLC along with WIT India chapter is aggressively pursuing a set of key objectives designed to attract and retain women to technology careers.

Clearly the programs center on three goals,

1. focus on IBM's technical women,
2. reaching down to young girls to fill the pipeline
3. outreach to university and professional women.



IBM India has put a stake in the ground to reach further back in the pipeline to encourage young women to consider careers in technology

Retain: These initiatives address causes in the internal and external environment that negatively impact work-life balance and attrition. Identified as the second barrier to women's advancement often described in roundtables has to do with managing a career and a family. People simply refer to this as *work/life balance*. Interestingly, women predominately identified this barrier, with few men noting the same concern.

IWLC with IBM's support has taken several steps to help address this area. To make it possible for people in a variety of situations to balance life and work several flexibility options are offered. These include Individualized Work Schedules, Compressed work week, Permanent part-time employment, Telecommuting options, Leave of Absence.

IWLC Retain initiatives extend to Safety and Security focus on women in the areas of transport and accommodation. Council members actively participate in Transport & Safety Committee meetings and drive initiatives forward.

Building an inclusive work culture is one of the key focus areas in IBM India. IWLC members drive execution of action plan for their respective Business units. Council members encourage managers to attend a half day program aimed to build the business case for the advancement of women and to come up with team actions that can help make that objective a reality.

Measurement

Women are key to IBM's success. The advancement of women is a cornerstone of our Diversity strategy and we have made great progress in recent years in this regard:

Women Diversity Metrics

- Women now comprise about 30 percent of the total ASEAN and South Asia employee population. Women make up about a quarter of our people managers in the region. This is on par with the numbers for IBM US employees.
- Worldwide, the appointment of women as executives has steadily increased over the years – over 400% in the past decade.
- In India 26% of our workforce are women of which 17% are in Leadership / Managerial roles.

Way Forward: Indian Women's Leadership Council year on year aspires to achieve greater levels of accomplishment and contribution towards the goal of Advancement of women. This will be significantly motivated by the visibility of role models and increasing support of the organization. IWLC will embrace the enormous opportunity that IBM has at hand in India. IWLC will energise teams, share enthusiasm to build business, collaborate with colleagues around the world.