

D&I at TCS Hundred thousand women and counting

Tata Consultancy Services, one of the largest women employers in the world, is weaving diversity and inclusion into the ethos of the organisation through several women-friendly policies and initiatives

All over the world, workforce trends are changing and markets are becoming increasingly competitive. Developing and sustaining a healthy mix of talent is one of the ways in which businesses can respond effectively to such challenges. With over 100,000 women employees, Tata Consultancy Services is one of the largest women employers in the world. This success is due to several initiatives that weave diversity and inclusion into the ethos of the organisation.

Here are a few aspects that make TCS a women-friendly organisation.

1. Mentoring programmes for junior women employees

Through Network to Win (nWin), mentors are assigned to small groups of junior women employees to provide guidance on professional and personal aspects. Career aspirations, work-life balance, organisational culture, life stage changes, leadership development, safety and wellbeing, etc., are addressed through discussion circles, formal and informal networking, coffee chats, virtual live chats and panel discussions.

2. Discussion circles to help women through lifestyle stages

Women sometimes take a step back from their careers or quit their jobs when they get married or have children. Mentoring and counselling can help them deal with challenges in maintaining work-life balance. It also encourages them to strive towards moving up the ladder. The provision of subsidised child-care and support groups for working parents help ease their responsibilities, allowing them to integrate both work and life.

3. Reorientation programmes to re-connect employees after long leave

Employees (both men and women) undergo a formal reorientation session after they return from long leave (more than 90 days) to help them pick up from where

they left off. The sessions cover new policies, process improvements and other changes that help employees seamlessly reintegrate into the system. If necessary, senior advisors also handhold them for a period of 3-4 months.

4. Encouraging a flat hierarchy and open discussions

As a part of the Be Inspired initiative, profiles of inspirational women leaders are shared every week through the company's internal social networking platform. Here, employees can connect with senior women leaders and know more about their journey. Panel discussions with senior leaders — both within and outside TCS — on subjects relevant to diversity are a regular feature across various geographies.

5. Grooming high-potential women for leadership roles

'iExcel' is a special programme which grooms high potential women in middle and senior levels to become leaders. Covering aspects like Business Finance, Customer Partnership and Sales, Business Strategy, Executive Presence and Power Messaging, the programme allows participants to interact with top leaders within and outside TCS, who also act as role models and mentors.

6. Global managers learn to manage diversity

TCS has developed a special learning module for mid-level managers, both men and women, to equip them with the skills required to motivate and work effectively with a diverse team. This module — called Managing Diverse Teams (MDT) — was launched on the company's internal development portal.

7. Day care tie-ups

To support women in the workforce, TCS has been undertaking day care tie-ups to provide good childcare facilities in and around office areas at subsidised prices. A virtual support group called 'workplace parents' has been formed to engage working parents through workshops on child psychology and parenting.

TCS' women-friendly initiatives are visible globally. The company recently celebrated the second anniversary of its all-women Centre for Business Process

and IT Services at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The centre employs over 1,000 women, of which 85 percent are Saudi professionals. It was launched in partnership with Saudi Aramco and GE to support Saudi Arabia's socio-economic development strategy and to promote job creation for Saudi women.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the unique technology services centre during his maiden trip to Saudi Arabia. He was welcomed by Cyrus Mistry, Chairman, Tata group, and N Chandrasekaran, CEO and MD, TCS, amidst applause from the assembled women professionals.

On the occasion, Mr Modi remarked, "It was wonderful interacting with all these talented women IT professionals who represent the glory of Saudi Arabia. The energetic atmosphere that I witnessed here today sends a strong message to the rest of the world. I congratulate TCS for their efforts in training talent in India and globally and making tomorrow's professionals equipped for the digital world."

BOX: MILLION WOMEN MENTORS – ENCOURAGING MORE WOMEN IN STEM IN THE COMMUNITY

TCS is a founding sponsor of Million Women Mentors (MWM), an initiative led by STEMconnector and in partnership with the National Girls Collaborative Project, NPower and MentorNet. Working together, the goal is to increase interest in Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) education and careers in girls and women, with a special focus on minorities and underserved populations. In March 2016, we crossed a major milestone by reaching two thirds of the programme's goal of 1,000,000 pledges from STEM mentors for girls, young women and minorities — in only two years since its inception. As a founding member of Million Women Mentors, TCS has pledged 15,000 mentors from its highly skilled global workforce, with the hope of inspiring girls and women to pursue needed STEM careers in both the US and around the world. TCS has also provided pro-bono services to develop the MWM technology platform, capturing the pledges, providing mentoring opportunity maps by zip code, connecting mentors to organisations and tracking progress.

BOX: The 100,000-women milestone

“Being the 100,000th female employee of TCS makes me feel honoured to be part of a prestigious company that offers opportunities to grow. One thing that stands apart for me in this organisation is how diverse the culture is. It allows me to meet people around the world and there is a tremendous sense of mutual respect. TCS gives me the feeling that it can bring out the best in me and make me more productive than ever before, hone my skills and help me become an efficient professional. I am glad to be a part of an organisation that is proud of its heritage, and at the same time, forward looking and progressive.”

Dulce Fabiola Ramos Hernandez – The 100,000th woman employee at TCS

“Today, women form one-third of our total workforce. Companies that do well in the future will be very diverse, and TCS, over the last 10 years, has been consistently looking at diversity from different angles. We are trying to ensure that we bring diverse skills and diverse workforce and diverse thoughts to work in our company. This is a very important milestone because women bring different ideas and perspectives. While we celebrate this milestone, we also want to see women continue to build long-term careers in TCS and want more women in leadership roles.”

N Chandrasekaran, CEO and MD, on reaching the milestone of 100,000 women in TCS

BOX: Women speak

“Doing things differently and doing different things is what keeps me going. I try to learn something new even now and then see how I can implement that within the next two years.”

— **Vijaya Deepti, VP & First woman engineer to join TCS**

“For realising your true potential, pursue your dreams but weigh in the pros and cons and take your decision wisely. Life offers very few opportunities.”

— **Baisakhi Deb, TCSer & International Para-Badminton Champion**

“The trust and confidence Mr FC Kohli (then deputy chairman and head of TCS) showed in a young employee by shipping a desktop machine home (there were no laptops then!), no questions asked, based on the fledgling business case presented to him by me! This was probably the first case of TCS allowing an employee to work from home, when the concept was unheard of two decades ago. It allowed me to spend time with my baby and to complete the work on my own schedule and win repeat business from the customer.”

Anita Nanadikar, Head - Incubation, CTO Office

“I received many updates during my leave. This reorientation session has really helped me to integrate back into TCS and my new role.”

Suchitra, Developer