

JLL

Empowerment

Initiatives such as flexibility to work from home when needed and a well thought out parental leave policy are making tangible differences in the family lives of women working at leading professionals services company JLL NZ.

JLL is working hard to empower women in a traditionally male dominated industry and has set itself a goal of becoming the most diverse property company in the world.

The company specialises in real estate and investment management and employs 82,000 people in 80 countries worldwide. JLL NZ employs 160 staff.



JLL's big push for diversity started in 2016/2017 when it established a Diversity and Inclusion Committee made up of staff from all levels of the organisation, from the Chief Operations Officer through to support staff.

Many ideas were put across the table resulting in the introduction of three main initiatives - a flexible work policy, a parental leave policy and a Women in Business group.

The flexible working initiative was designed to create a working day that works for families and individuals depending on their situation. It helps employees deal with everyday situations including working from home if a child is sick or amending work hours to suit traffic or family requirements such as a child starting school.

"This concept has been taken up by numerous staff with no impact on the day-to-day running of the JLL business," says JLL Communications/PR Manager Taryn Welch.

"Management has been on board with the flexible work policy from day one," she says. "They see it as being reflective on what is a changing work life, where traditional nine-to-five hours are no longer suitable for everyone."

Taryn herself has found the policy to be a life changer. "The ability to work from home when our daughter is unwell is a real game changer for our family. With no immediate family to assist us, child illness in the past usually meant my husband or I had to take a sick or annual leave day. However, now I can work from home using my laptop, and a layer of stress and the feeling of letting your team down is removed," she says.

A parental leave policy offering financial incentives and annual leave benefits for women and men, including those in commission-only roles, returning to work after having children is another initiative having a positive impact. JLL also provides paid non-primary carer leave and encourages staff to use it.

Associate Director Mark Hamilton used paid parental leave after the birth of his second child. "It allowed me to not only spend time with my wife and new baby, but also see how our first child interacted with

the newborn and help the child adjust. It is a special time for family and we were most grateful that JLL offers paid leave to parents.”

JLL has also introduced a Women in Business initiative and has held four events over the past 18 months, which are open to staff and clients. Speakers have covered topics including racism, growing a business from scratch, rising up in a male dominated industry, through to escaping a violent relationship and starting a charity.

Rez Gardi, who was awarded 2017 Young New Zealander of the Year for her services to human rights was particularly popular. Rez runs a charity called Empower, which is youth led and was established to educate, empower and enable refuge youth and other marginalised youth in New Zealand. Women in senior management positions at JLL are regular attendees and also help bring in new speakers.

It is hoped that empowerment policies will help JLL attract and retain women as well as become a more inclusive and family-friendly working environment. Currently, 32 percent of its staff are female. At management level, 41 percent are female.



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YOUR WORKPLACE MORE INCLUSIVE

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