



George Weston Foods

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

MEDIUM-LARGE ORGANISATION WINNER



Everyday Moments of Goodness isn't just a slogan for George Weston Foods, it's a purpose that's brought to life through its values and the way team members are encouraged to act each day.

George Weston Foods has three bakeries around the country and is responsible for producing much of the bread eaten in New Zealand, including the Tip Top Bakery brand.

The organisation's values are Safe, Courageous, Trusting and Collaborative, and its EMOG (Everyday Moments of Goodness) programme was introduced to encourage employees to recognise and celebrate those moments in each other's behaviour.

People and Performance Business Partner Solary Ha says, "We bring Everyday Moments of Goodness to life every day through our language, role modelling, our values and the way we act every day. We are encouraged to act as if we are owners of the business through our behaviours."

An Inclusion and Diversity Taskforce is headed by the General Manager Baking Division Mark Bosomworth and the business strives to foster inclusive teams through education and supportive initiatives. The taskforce is made up of representatives from across the business and has developed an inclusion strategy and a number of

initiatives, all designed to create an environment that embodies its vision of 'Everyone belongs, everyone is valued, and everyone has equal opportunity'.

Feedback from staff highlighted that flexibility was valued for the way it helped with navigating work and home life, and the organisation's leave policy was relaunched to take this into account.

In addition to topping up the Government's paid parental leave by an additional 12 weeks, key changes were made to the parental leave policy, including paying the employer contribution to Kiwisaver during unpaid parental leave for up to 40 weeks, and offering one paid day off work each week for 12 weeks following a return from parental leave.

In 2020 the organisation partnered with The Learning Wave to offer Winning at Wiri, a 12-week course for frontline workers at its Wiri site. More than 13 nationalities are represented at the site and English is often an additional language.

"This programme provided essential literacy skills to our frontline employees. The purpose of this programme was to enhance the engagement of our people, driving a culture of pride, personal ownership and accountability, as well as provide our frontline employees with the understanding, skills and confidence to work towards acting like 'owners of the business'," Mark Bosomworth says.

By championing its purpose and values, George Weston Foods is committed to pro-actively stamping out bullying and harassment.

"We encourage all employees across our organisation to role model our values, which includes being courageous to speak up when we see behaviours displayed not in line with our values and being committed to building trusting relationships across the organisation."

The commitment to creating Everyday Moments of Goodness goes beyond the workplace and into the organisation's communities. Employees are offered the chance to volunteer at approved community organisations two days a year, and through a partnership with KidsCan more than 100,000 loaves of bread are donated to schools.

"This is a great way to bring our teams together to collaborate to improve our community, and also ensure we are sharing our products and nourishing kids in New Zealand."

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THE AIM

George Weston Foods wanted to build a strong inclusive culture that would encourage employees to act as if they were owners of the business, bringing Everyday Moments of Goodness to life through their values and actions.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- An Inclusion and Diversity Taskforce developed an inclusion strategy and company-wide initiatives.
- Initiatives made in the following areas - race relations, parental leave, literacy skills, safety and wellbeing at work.
- The first global networking meeting held in 2020 to celebrate International Day of People with Disability, with employees sharing personal stories and challenges.
- A Women in Operations networking event was initiated across New Zealand and Australia to champion women in the industry.
- A 'Conversations for Performance, Engagement and Wellbeing Programme' equips people with the skills needed to communicate effectively in the workplace with peers and leaders.
- Commitment is made to not only creating Everyday Moments of Goodness in the workplace, but also within the community.



INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL BENEFITS

- Caring Everyday Programme offers employees two days a year to volunteer with approved organisations.
- Partnership with KidsCan sees more than 100,000 loaves of bread provided to schools each year.
- Partnerships bring teams together to collaborate to improve their community and ensure their products help New Zealand children.

KEY LEARNING

Encouraging employees to act as though they are owners of the business encourages buy-in to the company's purpose and values, and creates a culture of inclusion.

DO WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WELL AND DO WELL BECAUSE OF IT.

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