

Empowerment Award Winner: ANZ

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/137429003>

Empowering women to succeed in all aspects of life. Having a gender balanced workforce has become a key priority for organisations across New Zealand and the world. Increasingly the discussion is turning to other aspects of this debate; women are facing a poorer retirement, with on average around 28% less retirement savings than men; the wage gap is not getting smaller and women are currently being paid around 14% less than their male counterparts; and fewer numbers of women are represented in management roles or being appointed to Boards.

At ANZ, there is a growing awareness of the many ways in which women are disadvantaged in the workplace and the organisation is working hard to combat these issues. The figures speak for themselves in terms of the success they have already achieved in empowering their women, but there is still work to be done. Although 60% of the ANZ workforce are women, this representation drops off to 37% for women in management related roles and the ANZ is focused on achieving an equal gender split across all management roles.

To this end the business has put in place a number of measures to ensure that women are supported and empowered: they have equal visibility and opportunity for promotions, are supported throughout crucial life stages, and developed to their full aspiration and potential.

ANZ has developed a suite of initiatives aimed at supporting women in the workforce and created appropriate policies and frameworks to encourage more women into management roles. Regular analysis showed that less women were applying for internal promotions and that this in turn was affecting ANZ's future pipeline of female leaders. To counter this, the organisation has created targeted recruitment policies which specify one female must be shortlisted for every role, and participate in all interview panels. Other initiatives undertaken include 50/50 gender split Talent Programs and Graduate and Generalist Banker programs, as well as the Plus one pledge - personal support and call to action for gender balance by ANZ executives.

As part of the employee lifecycle, ANZ recognises that employees may need varying levels of support at different times and that people are not able to compartmentalise their lives when they come to work. To this end, female employees are offered increased support throughout all periods of parental leave with access to education and networking events including "Return to Work" workshops. They are also provided additional paid Parental Leave options such as 16 weeks' salary top up to full pay (18 weeks from 2016) and accrual of annual leave at full pay whilst on parental leave.

In February 2015, ANZ introduced the concept of "all roles flex" whereby all roles must be considered able to be performed flexibly and any barriers be actively dismantled. This applies to all roles across the ANZ group and is underpinned by training on making flexibility

work for teams with practical guidance and support tools for both managers and employees.

Hiring females isn't only driven by quotas at ANZ. Targets and relevant diversity measures are a key priority and are incorporated into Senior Executive's performance objectives to ensure they remain focused on increasing female representation across the business.

A key part of the diversity agenda is getting male buy in to the problem and the solutions and ANZ have been conscious not to develop a culture of blaming males for females not getting ahead.

This requires senior leaders endorsing the diversity agenda and framing it at a personal (I want my daughter to get ahead in life and not be held back because she's a female), moral (NZ is an egalitarian society where people are judged on their intelligence, hard work and character and not on superficial things like the colour of their skin, their religion, who they decide to fall in love with or whether they wear trousers or a dress) and business (half our customers are women and the more views at the decision table the better the decision will be) level.

In 2012, women accounted for only 10% of the commentary made by business leaders in both business and finance stories across the media. ANZ saw this as an opportunity to empower their senior women to lift their visibility and share their expertise externally. In August 2014, the business launched the Notable Women Programme developed by media expert and Global Head of Digital and Social Media, Amanda Gomes. The Notable Women programme trains senior executives to be recognised as an expert in their field and to build skills and confidence around contributing to internal and external forums and communication platforms and events. This culminated in the programme graduates presenting a visibility plan to ANZ CEO David Hisco, sharing their ongoing commitment to conferences, media opportunities, promotional activity, articles and an increased presence on social media.

Post-graduation, the Notables meet bi-monthly to share progress, stories and continue to inspire each other to succeed. There are now 20 Notable Women across New Zealand and all state that the programme has had a profound impact on their career and confidence levels with many actively engaging with and mentoring other women across the business.

Due to the success of the Notable Women Programme, a sub-program has also been established for those identified as high potential mid-level women. 'Aspiring Notable Women' will help ANZ to create a strong pipeline of female capability, role models and voices to support diversity of gender, thought and leadership, with these women becoming Notable Women and future leaders at ANZ.

The many initiatives that have been established to empower women at ANZ are working, with success in the hiring and promotion of more talented women since implementing this pro-active approach. They have worked hard to develop a deeper talent pool, removing bias from recruitment policies and securing the best possible person for a role because there is more talent to choose from, leading to diversity of thought and greater variety of leadership styles.