



A Toolkit for Gender Equality in Practice - Initiative

Sweco

Mainstreaming gender equality in the company

Summary of the initiative

Sweco delivers consulting services from feasibility studies, analyses and strategic planning to engineering, design and project management.

Since 2001 the company aimed at improving the percentage of female workers. In 12 years inspiring effects have been reached and the female workforce increased from 14% to 28% in 2012.

Sweco has undertaken various actions to recruit and keep female talents such as:

- Equal rights for women and men regarding parental leave: the women had 100% paid leave of absence – the men did not. Sweco Norway gives 100% paid leave also for the male workforce when becoming a parent, to remove differences between men and women. This way, Sweco wanted men to take parental leave of absence (especially leaders) to be good role models for their young employees. Immediately the company felt the effect that being a woman was no longer “a problem” when having a child. Now it is recognised that both men and women have children and take parental/maternity leave. Employees with children are also very loyal and well-organised since they have to drop off and pick up their child from nursery or school.
- Identifying talented women and training /preparing them for leadership: Sweco expected in every leader recruitment procedure that at least one woman was invited for an interview. This routine/expectation was an important part of training our male leaders to “see” women.... The women did not necessarily get the position. They had to be qualified, but when their managers noticed them – they very often got the position, or the next open position. A lot of leaders often employ “copies” of themselves – and if they are men they tend to employ men.

Reconciliation: the company has worked to establish a high degree of flexibility, and give the employees the possibility to work from home. This seems to be important to keep young parents – both men and women. They are able to work from home when domestic matters make it desirable for them to stay at home.

Priorities

Addressing gender roles, Promoting women in decision-making, Supporting work-life balance

Sector(s)

Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis

Type

Enterprise initiative





Country

Norway

Model of social partnership

Unilateral / Employer

Launch date

N/A

Number of employees

>250

This initiative was submitted by:

the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise - NHO (BUSINESSEUROPE)

Website

<http://www.sweco.no/no/Norway/>