

Caterpillar is the largest manufacturer of construction and mining equipment in the world, employing over 120,000 people across a range of products and services. In the UK, we have more than 10,000 employees based at 20 facilities across the country.

One of Caterpillar's key strategic aims is the creation of a truly diverse and inclusive working environment that reflects the nature of our global enterprise and the communities in which our facilities are located. The Company's desire to create and sustain a diverse and inclusive working environment is based on a belief that our organisation will be even more successful if it is able to acquire and retain the best talent, irrespective of their gender, race, religious belief, etc. For the UK, this is particularly focused on the promotion of gender diversity and we have a number of initiatives designed to help us to succeed in this regard:

Flexible Working & Benefits

The Company recognises the importance of promoting a healthy work-life balance among its employees. In the UK we have a formal policy governing flexible working which is designed to address the challenges faced by employees with childcare or elder care needs. Enhanced maternity benefits, discounted childcare vouchers, part-time working, remote working and job sharing are all examples of how Caterpillar employees can ensure that their work commitments can be achieved in ways that allow them to fulfil the needs of their family.

Employee Resource Groups (ERG)

ERGs are formed by employees and are recognised by the Company as independent, voluntary, non-profit groups of employees who share common interests and approved business purpose. ERGs bring value to the business through personal and professional development, mentoring opportunities, and more. They are typically created around an aspect of common identity and interests supporting Caterpillar's corporate values. ERGs also provide a platform for employees to provide feedback to the company about issues that are of concern to their members. One such group is The Caterpillar Women's Initiatives Network (WIN) that works to promote professional and personal development, employee recruitment and retention, cultural awareness, and community outreach. As with all of the ERGs, WIN has an Executive Sponsor at Divisional Vice President level, and is comprised of local Chapters around the world, including one for the UK. The WIN group in the UK meets regularly and has focused most recently on career development tools and techniques for its members.

Annual Inclusion Survey

The Inclusion Survey is an employee survey designed to help Caterpillar better understand areas of opportunity for engaging employees, respecting different points of view and building a more diverse and inclusive culture. Ensuring we have different viewpoints, unique experiences and global perspectives increases the likelihood for new and innovative ideas, leading to the best products and solutions for our global customers. Data arising from the survey includes gender diversity and the process requires leaders to take appropriate action to address any issues accordingly.

Role Models

Vice Presidents are the leaders of their respective divisions, controlling assets worth millions of dollars, and managing employees across the globe. Out of a total of 30 Caterpillar Vice Presidents, 7 are female including the Company's Chief Technology Officer and Chief HR Officer. Furthermore, Caterpillar's leadership development programme, LEAD, includes an element called "Leaders As Teachers" in which senior managers use their own career development as teachable experiences. A key element of this is the provision of female role models with whom female employees can relate and build their careers accordingly.

Conclusion

Caterpillar recognises that one of its key competitive edges, and therefore the reason for its success as a business, is its employees and the talent they bring to the organisation. Our focus in this regard is in the creation of a working environment based on diversity and inclusion, in which nobody should ever feel that their views, philosophy, creativity or innovation have ever been, suppressed due to, among other things, their gender. The interventions described in this case study are ones being taken to proactively seek to ensure that our female employees are able to fulfil their potential and successfully address the challenges that changes to their lives may bring during their career.