

# Recommendations



## 1. PRIORITISE PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Talent shortages have created a benefit war among some of Asia Pacific's biggest employers. Organisations that don't offer - or support - paid family leave put their employer brand at risk.

- Ensure that all employees, at every age & level, understand that a period of leave is the natural, ordinary step after welcoming a new child.
- Make sure your people policies are aligned with corporate ideals. Is equal paid bonding time offered to all new parents?
- Send the message that it's okay for dads to take leave, in fact it is expected!
- Use it as a valuable tool to close the pay gap and get more women into the C-suite.
- Prioritise paid leave for all employees - it will help foster a culture in which women have equal opportunities for advancement.
- Use your policies and practices to improve engagement and gender diversity at senior levels.

## 2. WAKE UP TO WORKING FATHERS

Address **all** aspects of paternal inclusion.

- Confirm enhanced paternity and shared parental leave policies.
- Establish cultural norms around men taking career breaks.
- Consider coaching support as responsibilities and stress levels expand.
- Equip managers with the tools they need to give working fathers the confidence to take paternity leave. This will be beneficial to individuals, their families, their performance and, ultimately, your business.

## 3. PLUG YOUR WORKING PARENT POLICY-PRACTICE GAP

Take a long, hard look at your policies, recruitment and HR messaging.

- Assess whether the employee experience truly matches up.
- Support line managers and senior leadership in creating the workplace culture that parents need - through targeted training or on-demand coaching support.

- For HR look at providing more generous parental leave policies given that Government leave policies are some of the lowest in the region.

## 4. INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FLEXIBLE AND PART-TIME WORKING

Ultimately, balance is making sure working parents feel they are in the right place at the right time.

- Help by introducing policies that allow flexible working, not just for working parents but for all employees.
- The key to success is establishing clear communication about what is on offer, and ensuring that employees understand the boundaries and expectations that come with this benefit.
- Managers depend on existing policies and procedures, and all new flexible working policies have to be tailored to suit each firm.

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## 5. RESPOND TO MILLENNIAL PARENT PRIORITIES

Younger working parents are leaning hard into more equitable divisions of parenting roles and responsibilities. They have different expectations. Different priorities.

- Organisations who want to retain talent need to be ready, making sure both policy and culture enable this.
- Through targeted coaching, help younger employees to create healthy, sustainable work habits by providing exposure to role models, as well as practical support to manage both workload and their perception of leader and team expectations.
- Ensure formal schemes and any informal policies (such as what really constitutes 'career commitment' in the workplace) match the expectations and needs of the future workforce.

## 6. CAPITALISE ON PARENTS AS PROVEN PERFORMERS

Parenthood, for all its challenges, provides your employees with an invaluable boost in essential transferable skills - make the most of them.

- Support working parents with flexible and innovative working patterns, coaching, progressive management attitudes, and help avoid discrimination against working parents.
- Evaluate advancement and reward practices to determine whether you're undervaluing caregivers and employees who work a reduced schedule.
- Provide training around caregiver discrimination and coach parents on how to advocate for themselves in the workplace.

## 7. HELP WITH COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

Not all parents want childcare to be provided by their families, and certainly not all women want to give up work once they have a baby.

- More can be done to help parents, particularly mothers, have courageous conversations with family members.
- Giving people the strength to be brave will pave the way for greater engagement and loyalty to your organisation.
- Cultural issues could be addressed by remote working, more part-time options and even on-site childcare facilities.

## 8. IMPROVE MANAGER ACCOUNTABILITY AND CAPABILITIES

Managers make all the difference.

- Provide managers and senior leadership teams with the necessary training and support to create the workplace culture that parents need.
- Working parents have unique capabilities, skills and challenges. Ensure they are supported by managers who are aware of these challenges and opportunities, as well as their own biases.

## 9. BEWARE THE MENTAL HEALTH TIME BOMB

Pressurised parents still seek perfection.

- Support and educate working parents to better manage their own wellbeing.
- Ensure that policy aspirations are reflected in reality.
- Encourage parents to move away from the perfection ideal, it is unattainable, and ultimately, unhealthy.

