

Case Study

CBRE

Case Study Highlights or Headline Statement

Attracting Women who have had a Career Break Back into the Workplace and Employing them at CBRE by Offering Sufficient Flexibility

Case Study Theme(s) Covered

Core Themes

- Bridging the Perceptions Gap
- Board Level Commitment
- Cultural & Behavioral Change

Flexible Working

Underlying Good Practice Themes

- Job Design/Headhunter Briefs
- Role Models & Change Champions
- Measuring & Monitoring – data, targets, tracking
- Diversity as Business Imperative
- Developing Leadership/Accountability
- Mentoring & Training
- Retention & Development

Career Progression and Opportunities

- Supplier, Panels, Candidates Diversity
- Public Commitments
- Sharing Good Practice
- Challenging Bias/Unconscious Bias
- Inclusive Management initiatives
- Appraisals, Objectives, Incentives
- Flexible Working
- Career Break Support
- Internal Networks

Case Study Background

In an effort to attract a more diverse workforce, CBRE have increased efforts to tap into the pool of talent comprising women who have had several years out of the workplace but who may be tempted to come back into the industry

As well as reaching out to both CBRE alumnae and other women, our Service Lines have been willing to take on women who may not have had up to date experience and who may need to work more flexibly in order to accommodate family commitments.

Many women lack the confidence to return after a long break, or are ignored by headhunters who believe that their experience/market knowledge is too out of date. Women may also not be aware how much times have changed and that firms like CBRE are willing to be much more flexible about the way they work.

Description of Initiative(s)/Policy Review/Process Change/etc

CBRE does not offer a formal returnship programme but has succeeded in attracting a number of women back to work through word of mouth marketing and through contacting women who have worked at CBRE or elsewhere (eg clients) at some stage in the past.

One example is one of the women in one of our regional offices. She was the wife of a client and had not worked for a number of years. By inviting her to come in to CBRE to work on a specific project for a week or so, she could then decide if a permanent role was something she would wish to pursue and which could work around her child care commitments.. In this case, after that 1st week she was keen to join CBRE (had not worked for us previously) but needed flexibility around the hours she worked. She joined the Valuation team on a permanent basis after that 1st week and works part- time, so can be flexible as to when she is at home or in the office.

Another example is an Alumna of CBRE who had left the firm and had a 7 year career break during which time she had moved away from London. Having been in our Research team previously, her former colleague approached her to investigate whether she would consider working part- time for CBRE again, on the basis of most of her work being from home, with occasional visits to the team in London. She rejoined the Research team and has worked on many projects.

Description of Outcome(s)/Benefits/Lessons Learned/Progress Check