



Lion - have set a target of a 50-50 gender split by 2026

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Lion is one of Australasia's largest food and beverage companies, employing over 7,000 people across Australia and New Zealand. They first started back in 1840, and now market dairy, juice, soy, beer, cider, wine, spirits, coffee and alcoholic and non-alcoholic ready-to-drinks.

Lion have done a lot of work in the gender equity space as they understand that it's the right thing to do, but also know it provides real commercial results. "Our strategy is focused on growth. Organisations with high growth worldwide are very innovative, fuelled by diverse teams working in an inclusive culture. So inclusion and diversity provides real commercial results" says Robin Davies, Lion NZ's People & Culture Director.

One of Lion's leadership principles is to 'act inclusively' and their gender equity work comes under this. They analysed and closed their gender pay gap 4 years ago, and are committed to keeping it closed. When they did this, 270 of their people got market rate adjustments (59 percent women and 41 percent men), so it was a large cost for the company, but an easy decision. Lion measure their gender pay gap by looking at the total reward package for their salaried people and compare this to external benchmark data, to see how their people are positioned against the salary range for their role. They are really open and transparent about why they were doing this with all their people, and they now re-analyse their data every 6 months, experiment and change their processes if gaps open up again, and always keep some budget aside to close any gap.

Lion have a target of a 50-50 gender split by 2026, across all functions and levels. Diversity is most impactful in individual teams, not just at a whole company level, and that's why they aren't just aiming for an overall split. Robin says "When we work in teams with people who look different to us, we get better outcomes because we listen harder, ask more questions and persist longer on complex issues. Gender balanced teams in particular increase the satisfaction of the whole team and the likelihood of everyone contributing their views."

They also do a lot of work in their talent acquisition space. One of the major things that they stopped doing last year was asking about current salary when recruiting. They now determine the right rate by the market rate, and this conversation is had between the candidate and someone from the talent acquisition team rather than the person recruiting, who holds the budget.

They are also trialling new ways of working all the time, and recently stripped all detailed criteria from their job ads. This was to encourage more women to apply, as research shows that women are less likely to apply if they don't think they can do everything listed on a job

ad (and men will apply when they think they can do some of it). They also used an app that checked gender bias in wording (which they now do in-house as built capability), they have 50-50 long and short-list targets for all recruitment, do targeted campaigns on LinkedIn to women, have diverse interviewing panels, run unconscious bias training, and keep collecting data so they can keep understanding and trialling new ideas.

Lion also offer flexible working, which is for everyone but has a big impact on women. They offer 4 types of flexible working (location, time, role, leave) and make sure that at least one type is available for everyone in their organisation. They also always start with a 'yes' when someone requests to work flexibly, making sure it works for them, their team, and for Lion. They have extended this even further during COVID-19, and now leave it up to teams to decide what works for them as a whole. Those that do work flexibly at Lion are healthier, get on better with their leader, and are more productive, so it's an area they are continually experimenting in and progressing.