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GENERAL MILLS AUSTRALIA Certified as a Great Workplace!

General Mills Australia is flipping gender norms on their head as an inclusive and equal opportunity workplace with nearly 60% of Australian management positions being held by women.

Flexible work arrangements, women's forums, health and wellness programs and half-day Fridays are just some of the initiatives in place to create an attractive workplace for women and have led to General Mills Australia being certified as a Great Workplace for 2020.

The *Great Place to Work*[®] certification is based on extensive research across thousands of workplaces around the world and is an acknowledgement of premium standard.

General Mills Australia has a long-standing culture of flexibility with various practices in place including hot-desking, home-working and flexible hours. In the last twelve months, they focussed on taking this to the next level by ensuring this was role-modelled by senior leaders and ensuring flexibility is a core part of life at General Mills.

National Business Manager, Jennifer Higgins, is one employee who has directly benefited from General Mills' flexibility. With twin daughters, an hour commute each day and being the main income earner, she never would have been able to take on additional responsibilities without it.

"The flexibility General Mills offers means I can manage my role and take on new responsibilities, as well as run a family," Mrs Higgins said.

"As long as you get your work done to a standard which meets General Mills' needs in the set time, it doesn't matter when you do it.

"General Mills' flexible work arrangements allows women to be on a level playing field by enabling us to work full-time hours. Without this, I would not have been able to have full accountability of my team."

Jennifer is one of three sales senior leaders helping change the culture at General Mills. The women to male ratio in General Mills Australia sales team currently sits at 60:40 women to men, compared to the industry ratio of 38:62ⁱ.

General Mills Australia/New Zealand Legal and External Relations Director, Angela Martinelli is another leader striving to inspire women. This has led her to champion a local branch of General Mills' Women's Leadership Network.

Ms Martinelli said the benefits of the Network were two-fold as it empowers women to ask more questions about work opportunities and put themselves forward. Secondly, for men attending, it shows them the actions they might have missed in considering women for opportunities.

Every month an inspirational female leader, both from within or outside the business, speaks about relevant issues for women including career progression, working and studying in historically male dominated fields, financial stability, and the momentum of women's professional sport.

"People in the business, both men and women, now know that it's important to speak about these issues, share their stories and learn from each other and we encourage this dialogue," Ms Martinelli said.

General Mills partnered with Benny Button, an employee wellbeing and performance program, to facilitate four interactive workshops that helped women leaders become role models for other aspiring leaders.

Through the Benny Button Program, General Mills Australia also conducted self-reflection workshops to see how its employees become accustomed to stress and provided tools to help address this. Initiatives developed as a result includes running groups, a mindfulness room, increased fruit and vegetable availability, a focus on mental health with the introduction of a Thrive Program with Assure, have helped shift the culture and improve the wellbeing of the entire team.

"General Mills is on a broader mission of diversity and inclusion. As a business, we are constantly looking to see how we can improve this and we will continue to strive to be a workplace where people can be themselves," Ms Martinelli said.

ⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016

