

CONVERSATIONS

BANKING ON BRINGING OUT ITS PEOPLE'S BEST

The DBS FutureForward Week returned this year with the aim of helping its people “be the best they can be”. Read on for the highlights.



Sharing of DBS' Future Of Work initiatives to implement new ways of working in the new normal

DBS held its FutureForward Week, an annual learning event for employees, from 25 to 27 July 2022. Themed “Be the best that you can be”, the event aimed to inspire and energise employees to reimagine the future and thrive in the post-pandemic world. Attended by more than 200 employees, the FutureForward Week covered topics such as upskilling and reskilling, as well as job redesign.

Dr Tan See Leng, Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade & Industry, kicked off the event with an opening address. He highlighted the importance of inclusive and progressive workplace policies that enable work-life harmony. Dr Tan also praised DBS as a “standard-bearer” in futureproofing local workers, commending it for retraining its staff, and its efforts in making its employees feel valued, engaged, and empowered – a topic “very close to his heart”.

Employees also got to exchange insights with DBS' leadership during the “Fireside” chat segment. DBS Singapore Country Head, Mr Shee Tse Koon hosted a Question & Answer session, during which both him and Dr Tan covered topics such as supporting mature workers amidst the rapid pace of skills disruption, how individuals can leverage the economic opportunities that have emerged post-COVID, and their learnings and experiences throughout their careers.

LAUNCH OF iGrow

FutureForward 2022 also saw DBS launching its iGrow platform, which seeks to futureproof its people all the way from onboarding to pursuing new opportunities within the bank.

iGrow uses machine learning and Artificial Intelligence to help individuals identify their future career aspirations, map the skills needed to reach those goals and even recommend personalised development options. For instance, iGrow can match employees assessed to be weaker in specific competencies to one of DBS Academy's more than 10,000 courses. It can also match an employee's profile against new roles that he or she might advance into, and provide development opportunities for those seeking to undertake new roles.

EMPOWERING EMPLOYEES TO THRIVE AT WORK AND IN LIFE

Beyond its constant career development endeavours, DBS is committed to building an inclusive and progressive workplace.

As a Human Capital Partner and an adopter of the Tripartite Standard on Flexible Work Arrangements, the organisation has been proactively offering a variety of flexible working arrangements to cater to its diverse workforce. Apart from job sharing, the organisation has adopted a permanent hybrid work model across the bank since February 2021, with all employees given the flexibility to telecommute up to

40% of the time. In addition, caregivers and parents with newborns can choose to work remotely completely for up to six months at a stretch. The bank also has a Job Share Programme that allows a role to be divided between two employees, without halving of medical benefits and insurance coverage.

In July 2021, the bank introduced “Focus Friday Afternoons”, where Friday afternoons are kept free from internal calls or meetings. This arrangement was designed to give employees a few hours of protected time for focused work, learning, or even a “quiet reflection” before transitioning to the weekend.

DBS has seen positive outcomes from its efforts. In June, employee satisfaction with DBS' flexible work arrangements hit 92 per cent, an increase from just over 80 per cent earlier this year!

BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN PEOPLE

As Dr Tan put it, **“Change is not a constant. Change is accelerating.”**

“Having all of our workers, colleagues, and employers achieve their highest potential will help us, especially in this tiny red dot, seize these new opportunities.”

DBS Bank has done just that – supporting its people amidst times of rapid technological changes, crises, and accelerating disruptions. Here's to the Singapore workforce becoming the best that we can be!

THIS COMPANY BUILT A GENDER-BALANCED WORKFORCE IN A MALE-DOMINATED INDUSTRY.

The manufacturing & construction industry is known to be a man's world. However, at Saint-Gobain, 50% of its management-level employees are female. Find out why and how this has been working for the company.

Penny Goh, Assistant Sales Manager at construction materials producer Saint-Gobain Singapore, is often the only female on site. This is not unusual for someone working in a male-dominated industry, as Penny puts it, common misconceptions such as males being more technically proficient than females.

However, such misconceptions do not faze the 37-year-old, thanks to the culture of inclusivity and support at Saint-Gobain.

“I am empowered and trusted to make decisions by my company's management, and they take my views and market insights seriously,” she shares.

“The resulting confidence allows me to produce results that prove valuable to the company. With my proposed strategies, I was able to achieve a 30% to 40% improvement in sales performance consistently.”

PAVING THE WAY FOR WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

“Diversity & inclusion is our priority, and we believe that females can bring different perspectives and add value to our workforce,” says Ms Lynette Siow, CEO at Saint-Gobain Singapore and Malaysia.

“Saint-Gobain does not discriminate against gender; we all start out on equal footing,” Penny agrees.

This culture of inclusivity is evident even before an employee comes on board. The company pledged its commitment to progressive workplace practices as a new Human Capital Partner this year. For instance, it hires based on merit, regardless of gender and other factors such as age and religion.

Once on board, women can expect a strong support system. For example, recognising that women tend to hold certain roles in their personal lives, Saint-Gobain set up the APAC Women's Group to support its female employees. During the year, the team in Singapore organised a range of activities and seminars for its female employees in the areas of personal finance, working from home, and corporate sustainability.

The company also makes it a point to celebrate women with a symbolic gesture – it marks International Women's Day with fresh flowers and cupcakes for all the ladies in the workplace!

WOMEN, STRONG IN MANY WAYS

Today, 59% of the company's global workforce are female, and about half of the management-level employees are females.

The company has seen the upsides of having a gender-balanced workforce – it observed that females, being generally more detailed oriented, particularly shone in the area of accuracy.



Assistant Sales Manager, Ms Penny Goh checking inventory of the construction materials at her workplace

Additionally, in the female-dominated Customer Service Department, high levels of coordination and communication amongst internal colleagues and external parties played a huge part in increasing sales.

“Physically, men are undeniably stronger. However, women are able to contribute valuable ideas, perspectives, and other human-centric considerations to a workplace – and a traditionally male-dominated industry is no exception,” says Penny.

“I believe the construction industry has the opportunity to better recruit and retain more women!”

BEHIND EVERY GREAT COMPANY IS THE RIGHT WOMAN.

The herCareer initiative helps companies expand their talent pool by attracting and training back-to-work women – a manpower source often being overlooked.

Women returning to the workforce are a motivated, driven group of talents who have made returning to work a new priority in life. They bring along rich work and life experience, valuable transferable skills, different perspectives, and creative ideas. They can also play important roles in building a healthy and collaborative workplace culture.



What Is The herCareer Initiative?

It is an initiative that can help your company find talents and provides training and funding support so that women returning to work can transit smoothly into your organisation and help your business grow!

Find the right programme for your needs:

PROGRAMME	WHAT'S IN IT FOR EMPLOYERS
Career Trial	See if a candidate is a good fit for your company with a short-term trial before considering formal employment. Valid for both full-time and part-time positions.
Career Conversion Programmes	Get the help you need to reskill new hires with industry-recognised training, and receive salary and course fee support of up to 90%.
SGUnited Mid-Career Pathways Programme	Explore full-time attachments with mid-career individuals (aged 40 and above) and tap their rich experience – training allowance will be co-funded by the programme.
MyCareersFuture Job Portal	Advertise open job positions at no cost! You can also find suitable candidates through the platform's job matching technology.
Workipedia by MyCareersFuture	Access articles on trending industry insights, success stories, hiring tips and best practices.

6 tips to attract and recruit back-to-work women

Review your company's branding

Make potential employees feel comfortable – show that you embrace diversity through your digital platforms and job ads!

Offer equal opportunities for men and women

Help women feel like they have access to the same opportunities as their male counterparts – from getting a job to earning a promotion and more.

Make the hiring process as gender neutral as possible

Try to avoid gendered job titles or descriptions – women will feel more inclined to apply for the job if the hiring process is unbiased.

Showcase more female role models

Share success stories of women throughout all levels in your organisation.

Support a healthy work-life balance

Consider flexible work hours and working arrangements which will allow women to attend to the demands of work and life.

Tap on the herCareer initiative

Engage back-to-work women through Workforce Singapore's employer support programmes.

EXPLORE THIS MANPOWER SOURCE TODAY!

Find out more about the *herCareer* initiative at <https://go.gov.sg/hercareer-tal>