ESG criterion for success: The Gender Equality Plan Step-by-Step

In today’s corporate world, diversity and equality are highly relevant topics – companies looking to ensure their future viability need to launch appropriate initiatives. With a dedicated gender equality plan, Fujitsu is adopting an approach to this issue that is both strategic and systematic.

The reason that gender and diversity are important and competitive is obvious: Only in a world where participation, sustainability, and trust are bywords can actual growth be created through innovation. Fujitsu has undertaken to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, which also include ensuring equal rights and treatment of women and girls in economic life. A notable element of such is the Women’s Empowerment Principles, which Fujitsu signed four years ago and has since subsequently implemented.

Development & implementation: It all starts with monitoring

What specific things is Fujitsu doing, how does the Gender Equality Plan affect day-to-day operations in the company?

First, the personnel data from HR is regularly monitored: Which and how many women are currently in management positions?

These results are logged in a reporting tool created specifically for this purpose and can be retrieved in a single click. These figures serve as a basis for all further decisions and measures.

Then, binding KPIs for gender policy and diversity are developed, which are also based on the respective regional framework conditions. Furthermore, each region can formulate and contribute its own additional KPIs on certain thematic areas.
Closing the pay gap

One such topic in particular is the gender pay gap – i.e. the unequal pay of men and women. Our aim is to make the gender pay gap a thing of the past. Whoever wants to get the most talented individuals on their team needs to offer attractive working conditions for all applicants, regardless of their gender. One example of such was in Great Britain, where Fujitsu was one of the first to implement the relevant government guidelines before they came into force. A special action plan was implemented, whereby all managers are required to consider a balanced gender ratio as business-relevant and act accordingly.

Encouraging work-life balance – for men and women alike

Another key area is the work-life balance and organizational culture. Promoting an inclusive work culture includes working flexibility in terms of location and schedule, job and top sharing, support for parental leave as well as trust-based working time and flextime as well as the “Mystery Coffee” initiative in place across multiple locations and countries.

The company has laid out clear objectives: There should be as many men as possible with parental leave and part-time employment. In addition, a guideline must be developed to inform managers about parental and care periods. On the other hand, more women need to be brought into management positions.

For this purpose, Fujitsu has introduced a Future Me e-mentoring program specifically for young women in order to prepare them from an early stage for management tasks. The success of this program is measured by comparing the participants with a peer group. Overall, by 2025 the proportion of women in management is expected to have reached 40 percent – this is already a basic component of Fujitsu’s business scorecard.

Last but not least, the company’s recruiting teams are trained to pay more attention to gender equality and to use inclusive language in job vacancies. Train-the-trainer sessions are even being planned or are already being implemented in the form of unconscious bias trainings when hiring graduates and students in dual courses of study. As the employees’ careers progress, the D&I area is a core component of all people reviews.
Also a topic for research & innovation

In order to ensure that the issue is firmly enshrined in the corporate culture, Fujitsu also considers the issue of gender as relevant for the field of Research & Innovation (R&I). The primary objective here is to research the relevant implications of the gender issue and thus to understand the specific needs of all people – and customers too.

In the near future, a gender equality plan will be as matter-of-fact as a quarterly report or an occupational safety policy. In this matter, Fujitsu is leading the charge and giving another dimension to the term “human-centric innovation.”

Regular monitoring of success

Whether gender or inclusion: It’s not just the intention and implementation that count, but also the records of success. Fujitsu tracks the degree of inclusion with a question built into its semi-annual employee survey. If the amount of approval registered fails to meet a minimum threshold, that means that more action needs to be taken.

A minimum requirement also applies to the “Mystery Coffee” initiative in place as an inclusion tool across multiple countries: Ten percent of the workforce should take part in it – a target which has already been met.

These examples demonstrate that Fujitsu provides comprehensive resources for D&I and continuously reviews the effectiveness of the measures. The important thing is that inclusion, gender equality, and the like gradually become the norm. Moreover, this norm should be one that requires less and less additional effort, as it becomes a natural part of the corporate culture – in all companies and industries.