

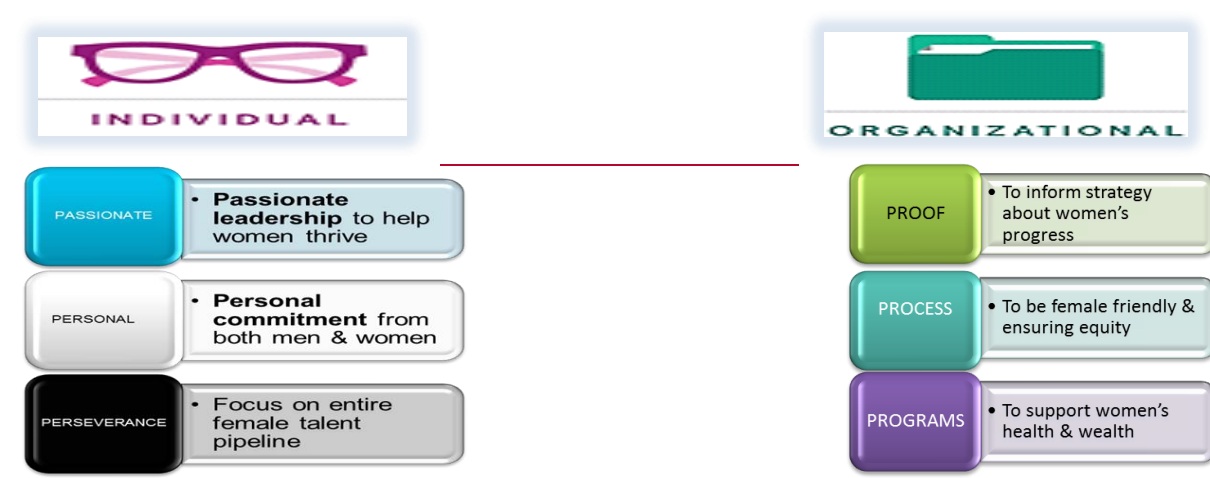
**INDIAN IT INDUSTRY DETERMINED TO SUPPORT MOTHERS RETURN TO THEIR CAREERS;
HELPING CREATE WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR WOMEN**

NASSCOM and MERCER launch report to analyze and address the drivers of female participation in workforce after starting a family

New Delhi, 08th March, 2017: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance diversity and inclusivity in the sector and build a robust ecosystem for returning mothers, **The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM)** today launched a report titled '*Facilitating Returnships: Providing Infrastructure to Returning Mothers*', in partnership with MERCER, a premier human resources consulting firm, to showcase the IT-BPM industry's readiness to support new mothers who want to return to their careers, focusing on the impact of child care provision at the workplace.

The report was curated based on a survey and discussions with 100+ companies who have child care practices; according to the findings, organizations in the sector are striving to provide a conducive environment to returning mothers, either through extending maternity benefit leave, onsite crèches or shared services facilities and flexi timings. The report also states that the industry is already trying to offer maternity leave benefit which are much above the Indian Statutory requirements of 12 weeks, showcasing that companies are more proactive in parental support by not waiting for the act to change.

Further the report states that, significant research has been done over the past two decades linking higher female representation in the workplace with a variety of business performance measures, including better financial performance; higher return on sales, equity and invested capital; higher operating results and better stock growth. Underutilization of female talent is a critical business issue and research reveals that organizations with diverse management teams make better decisions, as they are less prone to "group think" and able to see issues from many angles. To ensure more representation from the women in the workforce, the report highlights 6 action points for companies to focus on (based on Mercer's 6P MODEL emerging from When Women Thrive report):



- **Passionate Leadership:** Organizations with leaders who are actively engaged in D&I have more women at the top, and they hire, promote, and retain women at higher rates relative to men.
 - **Personal Commitment:** Organizations where men are actively driving D&I efforts have made more progress on improving gender diversity than those where men are not engaged.
 - **Perseverance:** Organizations should focus on systematic, supporting practices to build the female talent pipeline that will sustain gender equality in long term rather than just acquiring diverse talent at top
 - **Proof:** Leave and Flexibility programs can either help or hurt gender diversity, depending on who uses them and how well they are managed. Women also thrive when their unique competencies are leveraged in high Business impact roles.
 - **Processes:** Women thrive when there is diligent Pay equity process built on a robust statistical approach and regular focus on equity in performance evaluation and advancement opportunity.
- **Programs:** Female representation increases when organizations understand and support women's unique health needs.

Mr. Ashok Pamidi, Sr. Director, Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives, NASSCOM, said, *"We often see women employees leaving after the birth of a child due to lack of a supportive environment, where balancing professional development and childcare becomes strenuous. Recognizing the importance of maternity policies and facilities to help mothers return to work, we have partnered with Mercer to do an in-depth study of Infrastructure support needed for returning mothers within the IT-BPM industry. With this report, we aim to analyze and address the drivers of female participation, that should be used to maximize the engagement and productivity of all diverse segments of workforce".*

Ms. Mansee Singhal, Principal, Talent, MERCER, said, *"The study is aimed at providing insights into international Legal Frameworks, prevalence and details of policies and processes and best practices in employer-sponsored child care. We believe that it is the need of the hour and bring back some of the best employees who otherwise choose to stay at home due to personal commitments. We aim to further enhance the tremendous interest and commitment generated into an ongoing dialogue among stakeholders that accelerates the advancement towards employer-sponsored child care and contribute towards a progressive work environment and a happy society."*

Gender diversity has been recognized as one of key factors enabling an organization to out-perform their peers across multiple metrics. Global studies indicate that corporations with at least 10% women on boards have 2.5%-5% higher returns on equity; firms where women are at least 30% of C-Suite have 15% higher profitability than others; and gender diverse teams perform significantly better than more homogenous teams. The report observes that those making the greatest strides not only possess a belief in equality, but also recognize the complete value diversity brings to their organizations - from driving growth and shareholder value to catalyzing innovation; supporting employee engagement & retention, and also enhancing their connection with diverse customers and suppliers.

About NASSCOM



NASSCOM® is the premier trade body and the chamber of commerce of the IT-BPM industry in India. NASSCOM is a global trade body with more than 2100 members, which includes both Indian and multinational companies that have a presence in India. NASSCOM's member and associate member companies are broadly in the business of software development, software services, software products, consulting services, BPM, e-commerce and web services, engineering services and animation and gaming. NASSCOM's membership base constitutes over 95% of the industry revenues in India and employs about 3.5 million professionals.

For more information,

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