

Brief portrait of Ernst & Young

Ernst & Young is a global leader in professional services, specialized in legal, audit, tax, advisory and transaction services, accounting services and, in Switzerland, legal. In Swiss Ernst & Young has around 1700 employees and generated revenue of CHF 482,1 million in the 2005–2006 financial year. Ernst & Young Global's international network spans 140 countries and a workforce of more than 114 000. For further information about Ernst & Young, visit our home page at www.ey.com/ch.

GROW: objectives and measures

What are the objectives of GROW?

- To make Ernst & Young more attractive for women
- To increase the number of women in management positions
- To double the number of female partners

How will GROW achieve these objectives?

Mentoring

A partner mentors one or two female employees, coaching them, giving them the benefit of his experience, and acting as the point of contact for all types of questions. He can help them develop their skills, expand their network of contacts and plan their career. To this end, he holds regular meetings with them and sets objectives. After two years, the mentee decides whether she wishes to continue being mentored and may also choose a different partner as a mentor.

Raising awareness and training

Ernst & Young holds special workshops for women at colleges and universities on the subject of job applications. Participants get tips on how to succeed in business, learn presentation techniques and improve their rhetorical skills. In this way, Ernst & Young aims to make it easier for women to enter the business world.

Family support

Working parents within Ernst & Young benefit from the free childcare advisory service, which offers families solutions tailored to their needs, in the form of daycare, au pairs or emergency childminders, and supports parents in their dual role. In addition, all employees have the option of working part-time following the birth of a child or for any other special family situations. The employee's individual circumstances are taken into account and, in conjunction with the relevant line manager, a satisfactory solution will be found for all.



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Quality In Everything We Do

Growth and Retention Of Women (GROW)

Promoting Women at Ernst & Young



GROW – the name says it all

Women are playing an increasingly important role in the business world. But the number of women in senior management positions is still disproportionately low. Regrettably, the situation is not yet different at Ernst & Young: 35 % of all employees are women, but of this number, only 20 % are in manager or more senior positions.

Well, all that is about to change. Women are no less career-oriented than men; yet they often have to work harder to achieve the same objectives as their male colleagues. In recognition of this problem, Ernst & Young launched the GROW (Growth and Retention Of Women) initiative in 2005 with the aim of making our company more attractive for women, increasing the percentage of women in management positions and doubling the number of female partners within the next five years. Measures such as mentoring and the promotion of part-time work will help us to achieve these goals.

To increase the proportion of female employees in top jobs, awareness must be raised, both inside and outside our company. This brochure is designed to help us achieve that aim. Here you can find out more about the objectives of GROW and related measures. The brochure also features profiles of three successful women at Ernst & Young, to encourage other women to follow suit. Find out how these women manage to balance work with different obligations, and get boosted by their dynamism!

Barbara Lambert

Partner and Member of the Board of Directors
Head of the Swiss GROW Task Force



Monika Moritz, Senior Manager

How do you organize things at home?

After the birth of my first child, my husband stayed at home for almost two years. He went back to work after my second son was born. After four months of maternity leave, I returned to my job and hired a nanny. Because of my working hours, she needs to be very flexible. So for me a crèche with fixed hours was out of the question.

Why do many women decide against returning to work after having a child?

It was difficult for me to go back to work, too, even though I really enjoy working and love my job. The bond between a mother and her baby is extremely close. But I always knew that I wanted to combine family with a career, and that I could do it.

Is part-time work possible at Ernst & Young?

On both occasions Ernst & Young responded positively when I cut down my working hours, first from 100 % to 80 % and then to 60 %. But I only ever intended to work at 60 % for a short time, because I know now that working on a 60 % part-time basis at my level is difficult for all persons involved.

Why is mentoring needed?

Men ask themselves how relevant a task is in terms of corporate policy and how they can advance their career. In my view, women are less likely to ask themselves these questions. Women tend to concentrate on the substance and content of a task, and by doing so they hope to convince their colleagues of their ability. That is why there is a need for mentors to bring out a woman's strengths and promote her by taking her along to important meetings and events, introducing her and supporting her effectively.

How can women make names for themselves in a men's world?

Women must network more. They need to start building up a network already at university and fostering contacts in the same way as men do. That means, touching base with some of the important people from time to time; for example by giving them a phone call. Because you only get promoted if you can make yourself known.

What would be your wish for the future?

I would like to see more women getting promoted after they have had a child, and for this to be seen as a challenge rather than a problem. I would like companies to provide the necessary infrastructure, for example local crèches. And I wish men could be actively encouraged to work on a part-time basis too, in order to be there for their family. But most of all, I wish that the changes in the corporate culture being driven by the rising number of women in key positions could be seen as a major market advantage instead of a threat.



Robin Ginn, Partner

Why are more women needed in the workplace?

Men and women have different strengths. Combine them together, and you obtain better results. I have also observed that clients expect their engagements to be handled by mixed teams. Also, I believe in general that men like working together with women.

How did you become a partner?

It was not easy. I worked hard to get there, but I also received a lot of support. At first I had the feeling I could never be accepted into the “Boys’ Club”. But I proved myself and was able to convince the other partners of my abilities. But I have only been a partner for three years now. Therefore, I still have more to learn!

What do you like about your job?

It is very challenging. I have a lot of responsibility and a heavy workload, but this helps me to continually develop. I work together with great people and I am proud to be a part of Ernst & Young. Once you reach the position of a partner, you have not yet achieved everything – on the contrary, you have only just begun.

Can someone who works part-time become a partner?

Absolutely. If you worked hard for years and then decide to decrease your hours due to your personal circumstances, you still have the chance to become a partner. Especially if you have already demonstrated that you have the right motivation to take on this responsibility. However, this should not be confused with a fundamental preference for working part-time. As this may give the impression that you do not take things quite so seriously and do not have the necessary motivation.

What can a mentor do for his mentee?

The mentor must get to know the mentee, listen to her and help her to identify her needs and goals. Together they must determine what is realistically achievable within the company. The mentor can further provide advice that can help the mentee to achieve her goals.

What is your recommendation to a woman wanting to pursue a career?

She must believe in herself that she can do it! She has to continually work hard, take a tough position and sell herself. No one is going to take her by the hand and pull her through. She has to get there on her own merit. As such, she should be sure that this is what she really wants.



Michèle Luyet, Manager

How do you balance your family life and career?

You cannot be a fantastic mother, a good housewife and a successful businesswoman all at the same time. I therefore decided to be a good businesswoman and good mother. The nanny who looks after my son while I work is also a great help with the housework. That way, when I come home I have a lot more time to spend with my child and I can enjoy my free days with my family. Thanks to my nanny I can also be more flexible within my workschedule.

How did people around you react to your pregnancy?

Not very positively at first. Lots of people think that our industry is not a place for working mothers. Some advised me to look for a less demanding job. They meant well, but they did not support me. Yet when I returned from maternity leave, the GROW initiative had just been launched. This was a great help. My bosses understood that I really wanted to keep on working and to be a role model for other women.

So is part-time work possible in Ernst & Young's business?

In my opinion, our industry is ideal for women with children. I saw it work in the USA and have experienced the same here. You can take on responsibility even if you work less than full-time. You just have to take on fewer mandates and be reachable on days when you are out of office.

Do you sometimes get the feeling that you can not please anyone?

For the moment not at work, but occasionally at home. Sometimes my son cries when I leave for work, which is hard for me. But I do not think he really loses out by my working because I spend plenty of quality time with him at home and I can see that he is happy. In fact, I probably find it harder than he does.

How emancipated is Switzerland in your opinion?

Compared to the USA we are ten years behind. What I saw there is fantastic and motivated me to combine family with a career. But it is far more difficult in Switzerland because we simply do not have the infrastructure. For example, there are nowhere near enough crèches. Most of the Swiss companies are not geared up for working mothers, because for many years they were a rarity – Attitudes have to change.

How can you change people's attitudes here in Switzerland?

By more working women having children and showing that it is possible to combine a family with a career. The more common it becomes, the more people will realize that it can be done. But first we need to encourage women because many of them believe they are incapable of being mothers and businesswomen at the same time. I, too, had my doubts before I saw it with my own eyes in the USA.

What advice would you give to a woman who is contemplating combining family and a career?

You need help with the housework and a supportive environment. And it is easier to have a baby if you have already reached a certain stage on the career ladder – in our case, if you are a manager. That gives you more flexibility. Moreover, you need to be prepared to pay for childcare and hired help around the house. It costs money, but it is worth every penny in terms of your quality of life.

Monika Moritz grew up in Germany and studied Sinology at the Universities of Heidelberg, Shanghai and Leiden. She spent several years in China and, on her return to Germany, completed a postgraduate course in management sciences. After several years working in the tax department of a Big Four and as a lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences in Constance, she joined Ernst & Young in Zurich in 1999, transferring to Ernst & Young in Lausanne in 2003. She is a senior manager specialized in international VAT law. Monika Moritz is married and has two small sons. She currently works 60 %.

Robin Ginn grew up in New York and graduated from Alfred University with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. After her studies she trained as an auditor. After working for a firm of auditors in New York and a bank in California, she moved to Europe in 1995, where she joined Ernst & Young in Basel. Since then she has worked in the audit area for Ernst & Young in Los Angeles and Switzerland. She now works in Zurich, primarily on major international clients, and has been one of four female partners at Swiss Ernst & Young for almost three years.

Michèle Luyet grew up in the canton of Valais and studied economics at Lausanne University. During her studies she spent several months in Munich, where she perfected her German. After graduating, she joined UBS and moved to Ernst & Young in 2002 via Arthur Andersen. An auditor specialized in banking, she worked for Ernst & Young in Washington and New York for 15 months. Michèle Luyet is a manager. She is married, mother of a one-year-old son, and currently works 80 %.