

Qwest Communications

CWCC Company of the Year Award Finalist, Large

Qwest Communications operates on the idea that they hire the best person for the job. They employ many strong female leaders who define the company's vision and lead the company forward in an increasingly competitive field.

One quarter of the people reporting directly to the CEO are women. Currently, one-third of the company's senior leadership (C, EVP, VP and Director level) are women and 37 percent of the employee population is women.

Although the make-up of the family is changing, with more and more couples sharing the responsibilities of home life, most working women still have responsibility for the majority of the "second shift." Qwest offers a solid benefits package that helps women balance the demands of a career and home, freeing time to focus on career advancement opportunities.

Qwest has a long history of employee resource groups. Qwest Women is currently the largest resource group with the most members of any of the eight groups. The group began in the mid 1970's and is one of the oldest corporate employee resource groups of its kind in the nation. Members use Qwest Women as a way to network, informally mentor and learn more about career paths and professional development skills. The Colorado chapter frequently hosts a "Lunch and Learn" series bringing in senior female executives to educate other women about the business, answer direct questions and provide career advice.

The finance organization has a formal talent development approach called "Plan, Position, Move," which helps develop identified high potential candidates. The Qwest law department also has an informal mentorship program for all high potential candidates. Currently, 65 percent of the entire legal department is women and half of the top management positions are held by women.

Qwest has several career development training programs that benefit women, including a course for all new managers, "Role of the Manager," and "Transition to Leadership" which is available for all new managers in its Mass Markets organization. In both these courses women learn skills about managing teams for maximum contribution, leadership, time management and team building skills.

In 2007, Qwest created an executive level diversity steering committee dedicated to making sure a culture of diversity and inclusion lives in every segment of the business and that each employee understands their role in personally contributing to this culture. The committee looks at all areas of diversity the business, including the specific needs of women in the workplace.

The committee is currently evaluating trends in the workplace with regards to women and diversity, including hiring, retention, promotions and overall company make-up. The

committee is looking at additional work-life balance issues and differing career development needs that women uniquely face in the workplace.

In addition to promoting women and working with women to further their careers, Qwest works with many women-owned companies. Nearly half of minority contract dollars were awarded to women-owned firms in 2008. Out of \$369,600,514 awarded to Women-, Minority-, and Disabled Veteran-owned Business Enterprises (WMDVBE), \$197,229,038 was spent on goods and services provided by women-owned firms in 2008. Qwest Communications Company holds contracts with values over \$200k or more with 283 women owned firms.

Additionally, Qwest and many of its women executives are involved in community service organizations.