

## Marks & Spencer

Developing a long-running strategy / Evolving a family-friendly strategy for a large and diverse workforce

### The company

Marks & Spencer is a major food, fashion and interiors high street retailer with 347 stores around the world, including 333 in the UK.

Turnover                                    £8,135.4m  
Pre-tax profit                                £335.9m

\* All figures are based on the financial year ending 2002.

### Workforce

No. of UK employees 60,000 (2002)

### The problem

Marks & Spencer has been committed to work-life practices for many years, valuing a balance between employee and customer needs.

The company believes in continuously updating its policies and in creating innovative solutions for both customers and staff. In order to remain an employer of choice it needs to keep developing imaginative working practices.

### Response

#### The process:

- Identify the requirement for a new policy
- Develop proposals with operators
- Consult with Business Involvement Groups (BIGs)
- Check practicability
- Launch new initiatives with an internal marketing campaign (briefings, posters, flyers booklets, Intranet) reiterating the company's commitment to work-life
- Support and training are provided to ensure a consistent approach
- Results measured via Marks & Spencer's twice years employee satisfaction survey, 'The How Are We Doing Survey' and post-implementation surveys

#### Lifestyle Options:

Marks & Spencer's raft of work-life initiatives, which exceeds statutory requirements, consists of:

1. Policies available to carers
2. Policies to support community involvement

For all employees	
Flexible working patterns	A range of options available
Career leave	Employees who have completed two years' continuous service may be entitled to up to 9 months' leave
Domestic emergency leave	Time off is available for domestic emergencies. This may be paid or unpaid, depending on the situation
Welfare help line	A team of trained employees are available to

	listen and respond to employees' concerns and problems
--	--

<b>For parents</b>	
Enhanced maternity and adoption pay	Employees with more than a year's service have a choice of two enhanced pay options
Enhanced paternity pay	Two weeks' paid paternity leave.
IVF	Support during IVF treatment
Fostering	Support and leave are available
Parental leave	Entitlements are not limited to four weeks per year
Child break scheme	After 5 years' service, both male and female employees can take up to a 5-year break
Starting school	Time off for parents to accompany their child on their first day at primary school
<b>For carers</b>	
Dependency leave	Paid and unpaid leave to assist employees who care for a sick family member
Dependency break	Employees with 2 years' continuous service can take a break in service to cope with a long-term carer need
<b>For people who help the community</b>	
Justice of the Peace / School governor	Support available
Political appointments	A break in service is available for potential political candidates
Other public duties	Support available

### **Business benefits**

- Greater productivity
- Bigger recruitment pool

"Displaying a commitment to work-life balance widens the recruitment pool from which to find the best people and helps to maintain employee commitment to the business. This in turn realises savings in recruitment and training and increases productivity."

### **The future**

Marks & Spencer will continue to look at the needs of individual employees, valuing difference rather than conformity, and to develop policies which support this approach.

June 2003