The IBMer

Smarter business begins with the IBMer

IBMers are committed to leading a new era of business and IBM commits to empowering their success — supporting and guiding them in careers that reward themselves, our clients and the world.
Supporting IBMers
To thrive in an ever-changing world, we must continue to reinvent how we work and inspire IBMers in their careers. We provide personalized guidance and resources — augmented by AI and supported by digital, social and mobile technology — so that IBMers around the world can enjoy satisfying careers, increase their expertise, learn from others and engage in their professional development. Our investment in skills, combined with our use of design thinking and agile practices as standards of working, have created a workplace uniquely capable of delivering better solutions in less time.

Blue Matching
Blue Matching helped nearly 800 IBMers advance their careers in 2017. The internal service uses workforce predictive analytics to produce a list of jobs currently available in IBM based on the employee’s location, level, job role and experience. By “opting-in” IBMers receive weekly notifications to view potential job matches within the company. Since Blue Matching more effectively targets applications, IBMers who use it have received up to twice as many interviews and five times the number of offers.

My Career Advisor
My Career Advisor is a personal cognitive solution IBMers can interact with for real-time career insights and guidance. Using what-if scenarios, the tool recommends how to grow skills, future job roles and stretch assignments.

Your Learning
The Your Learning platform is an IBM’s gateway to professional development. Personalized with cognitive capability, it understands exactly what an IBMer needs and recommends and tracks the employee’s professional education all in one place.

Employee well-being
At IBM we continue to believe that our ability to serve our clients and communities depends upon employee well-being. In 2017, we focused on supporting evolving global community health priorities while continuing to enhance our health and safety management system.

Disaster relief efforts in the Americas
In 2017, our health and safety teams provided timely support to IBMers and their families affected by hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria; earthquakes in Chiapas, Oaxaca, Mexico City; and wildfires in California. They engaged with IBM’s crisis management teams and building management staff to ensure safety during these events, volunteered in cleanup efforts, supported the reoccupation of facilities and provided much-needed employee and family counseling to address emotional health, medical support, financial and legal challenges.

Bureau Veritas recertifies IBM’s Well-Being Management System
IBM’s Well-Being Management System (WBMS) is framed around IBM’s Corporate Policy 127, responsibility for employee well-being and product safety. Following International Organization for Standardization (ISO) consensus standards, system components include proactive planning, execution excellence, measurement and continuous improvement in the areas of employee health and well-being.

Continued external certification of IBM’s WBMS through the Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) 18001 certification process, and a standardized approach to managing employee well-being globally, provide IBM the ongoing ability to fulfill marketplace demands and foster business opportunities around the world.

Additionally, all of IBM’s hardware research and development operations in the United States were recognized once again as Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs star sites for outstanding programs and results.

Awards
– IBM received the American Heart Association Gold Designation for a healthy workplace, achieving double the average score.

IBM’s ability to serve our clients and communities depends upon employee well-being.
IBM was recognized with two International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Gold Quill Awards, for excellence in human resources and benefits communications, and for merit in internal communications.

Employee inclusion

IBM consciously builds inclusive teams and encourages diversity of ideas to have the greatest impact for our clients, our colleagues and the world.

Standing with our employees

IBM’s long history with LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) workplace equality began in 1984 when we included sexual orientation in our nondiscrimination policy. In 1995, we established an LGBT+ executive task force that today is known as the Global LGBT+ Council and is focused on making IBM a safe and desirable workplace for all people.

For the 15th consecutive year, IBM scored 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign’s Corporate Equality Index, the national benchmarking tool for corporate policies and practices related to LGBT+ employees. The index, released each autumn, provides an in-depth analysis and rating of large U.S. employers and their policies and practices pertinent to LGBT+ employees.

In 2017, IBM fought the transgender bathroom bill in Texas, where it is a significant employer. The company bought full-page ads in some of the state’s largest papers, joined forces with other technology companies and signed a joint letter to the governor, and sent our executives to Austin to persuade state legislators to drop the bill—which they did in August.

Later in the year, IBM took a similar tack to urge the U.S. Congress to find a permanent legislative solution to enable “dreamers”—children raised in the U.S. after their parents brought them into the country without legal immigration status—to stay in the United States. The company launched an awareness campaign and flew the 31 “dreamers” it employs to Washington to meet with lawmakers directly. Ginni Rometty also went to Washington for discussions with lawmakers. For more, read the statement by IBM Vice President of Government and Regulatory Affairs, Christopher Padilla, about IBM’s amicus curiae brief filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. The brief supports several states, local governments and others challenging the revocation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

Advancement of women

A significant imperative for IBM has been the belief that “you can’t be what you can’t see,” and in a world where less than 5 percent of CEOs at S&P 500 companies are women, we continue to take pride in our Chairman’s leadership and the diverse perspective that offers us. Four of Ginni Rometty’s direct reports are women: IBM Senior Vice Presidents Michelle Browdy (IBM’s general counsel), Diane Gherson (human resources), Michelle Peluso (chief marketing officer) and Bridget van Kralingen (leader of IBM’s global blockchain business).

For us it’s not simply about representation, but also driving a culture of inclusion where women can thrive. We’ve done this through initiatives such as Elevate—a leadership development program focused on helping to prepare women to be considered for advancement from middle-management positions into senior leadership roles through customized learning plans, coaching, and shadowing opportunities. Started in 2015, the program has reached over 700 women across 20 countries. About half of participants have already been promoted into senior roles.

IBM’s hiring practices continue to be based on identifying the best-qualified individual to fill a position. At one time, the industry standard for the selection of programmers was the IBM Programmer Aptitude Test—in 1967, over 700,000 people took it, resulting in 20,000 women going into programming in the 1970s. Over time, this test was overtaken by newer, much less scientific, personality-based assessments, resulting in a decline of women entering technical/engineering fields. Today, IBM continues to use cognitive aptitude tests, proven predictors of job performance—and arguably this
We are committed to the progress and leadership development of women at IBM.

gender-neutral selection approach helps explain why we continue to have one of the highest proportions of technical women in our industry — and a culture of inclusion.

IBM has also partnered externally to drive outcomes. One example is a collaboration with the Soledad O’Brian Foundation, through which we co-launched the IBM and PowHERful summit in 2017. The summit provided young women, ages 14 to 23, an opportunity to explore different career options, receive guidance and advice, and interact with IBM technical professionals. Participants engaged in a three-hour Cognitive Challenge where they worked with IBM Watson® and received coaching from IBM artificial intelligence experts.

Our success in initiatives such as these has led to our receiving the prestigious 2018 Catalyst Award for leadership in building a workplace that values diversity and inclusion. IBM was the only tech company honored this year — and the only company in the history of the award to be recognized for a fourth time. IBM was also recognized by Working Mother Media as one of the top 10 companies on both its 2017 100 Best Companies (for the 32nd consecutive year) and Best Companies for Multicultural Women lists (for 15 consecutive years). Working Mother also named IBM a top 10 employer in India for 2016 (the inaugural year) and 2017. We also received the Momentum Award from the Anita Borg Institute for significant year-over-year growth in women technologists in senior and executive roles.

PINK October – Breast cancer awareness
Leaders of the IBM Women’s Executive Council and the IBM International Foundation launched PINK October globally throughout IBM. During the month, we provided resources, support and hope for IBMers who have been diagnosed, are in remission or are supporting others in the fight. Through local activities and work we are doing with clients and partners supporting the cause, we explored the vast impact breast cancer has on society and planned breast cancer walks globally with IBM representation.

People with disabilities
Including people with different abilities in IBM’s workforce is based on sound business judgment and anchored in IBM principles and HR strategy. IBM’s recruiting teams play an essential role in identifying and interviewing skilled people with disabilities. Through a training module and a recruitment guide, IBM helps recruiters understand how to effectively provide reasonable accommodations when recruiting people with different abilities and to know what support is available within IBM for employing people with disabilities.

In 2017, IBM was recognized by the U.S. Business Leadership Network as the Employer of the Year for its commitment to building a better working world through its actions and engaging with like-minded organizations and individuals. IBM is regarded as a thought leader around the world for people with disabilities, as illustrated by some recent awards.

- Australia — IBM came first in the Australian Network on Disability’s Access and Inclusion Index
- India — IBM received the Nipman Foundation Equal Opportunity Award
- Italy — IBM received the Dyslexia Friendly Corporate Certification Award from the Italian Dyslexia Foundation
- Hungary — IBM received the Disability-friendly Workplace Award delivered by the Salva Vita Foundation

Employee engagement
IBM’s efforts to lead progressive workplace practices around diversity and inclusion are a constant part of the company’s culture. In 2017, IBM dramatically expanded family support options in the United States, to meet the increasingly diverse needs of parenting today.

- We increased paid parental leave for IBM birth mothers up to 20 weeks (from 14 weeks).
- We doubled paid parental leave for IBM fathers, partners and adoptive parents to 12 weeks.
IBM parents can choose to take bonding leave time during the first year following the birth or adoption of a child.

IBM will reimburse up to $20,000 for eligible adoption or surrogacy expenses, including medical costs associated with surrogate birth mothers.

IBM Business Resource Groups (BRGs) are volunteer, cross-department, employee-led groups that focus on a common interest or a certain constituency. BRGs aim to align their programs and initiatives with IBM’s business and talent workstreams, which include Recruitment and Hiring, Talent Development, Employee Retention and Market Development.

IBM now has 45,000 employees who belong to 300 BRG chapters registered in 51 countries supporting 13 constituencies or focus areas.

Recent groups added include an LGBT+ BRG in Russia and our first Women’s BRGs in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Leadership development

At IBM, we support our leaders through simple, science-based solutions to sustain high performance and accelerate adaptation to change. Programs such as Leading with Resilience provide a whole-self approach to adopting new mindsets and behaviors to meet the demands of the job and bounce back even stronger when challenged. Our leaders strive for and maintain excellence by utilizing data-based, externally benchmarked success profiles and assessments to build skills targeted for critical roles.

Aspiring Manager’s Program

In 2017, we expanded the opportunity for those who aspire to be managers by creating a scalable, engaging and cost-effective assessment and development experience. By using multi-method, criterion-validated assessments and simulations, we are providing objective business insight and uncovering hidden talent. Using design thinking, we created a highly engaging experience that considers the needs of participants, their managers, as well as HR and business unit leadership. The inclusion of a manager’s portal for participants’ managers, and a cadre of debriefing specialists/coaches to support participant questions and help interpret their assessment, keeps the human connection intact as we move to a digital platform. The scalability achieved reduces the cost, allowing more aspiring managers to participate.

Coaching

We augmented our Coaching Community of Practice in 2017 through the addition of Blue Core Coaching, which utilizes a peer-to-peer engagement framework by pairing a subject matter expert (SME) with a cohort of learners. Learners do pre-session development and then use 10 weekly sessions to practice the GROW (Goal, Reality, Options, Will) model for coaching. Participants learn from the SME and from each other, which enables better skills integration and maximizes SME impact. The success of Blue Core Coaching encouraged us to apply this approach to other leadership training, such as Servant Leadership, Leading with Resilience, sales leadership, agile coaching and offering management.

Manager Champion Group

Manager Champion Group (MCG) is a one-year leadership development experience, launched in 2013, that grows and empowers exemplary IBM managers to drive change. Participants have opportunities to accelerate IBM’s business goals, serve as the voice of IBM managers around the world and further develop their own leadership skills and the talent of others. In 2017, Manager Champions facilitated over 50 management development workshops, led coaching circles and participated as co-hosts for Leadership Live (our monthly, live leadership development broadcast); advocated for new initiatives such as Performance Management, the Aspiring Manager’s Program, and Cognitive Talent Alerts; and partnered with the Millennial Corps, Employee Experience Team, the IBM Leadership Academy and many other key stakeholders.

Corporate citizenship

IBM uses its globally recognizable brand to lead social progress by partnering with external organizations that serve diverse populations and underrepresented communities to provide leadership development. In 2017, in association with
IBM’s Diversity Team, we engaged with college students and early professionals through partnerships with Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA), Advancing Minorities’ Interest in Engineering (AMIE) and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES). We worked with IBM Corporate Citizenship to deliver education on feedback, coaching and manager effectiveness at the Global Peace Foundation’s annual conference in Manila, and delivered a Leadership Impact Grant to the International Young Leaders Assembly during their 2017 Global Summit hosted at the United Nations.

Professional growth through social impact

IBMers have the opportunity, through specific IBM pro bono programs, to apply their professional and technical skills for social impact. Whether a project is on the other side of the world or across town, they collaborate with communities and organizations to solve immediate problems and return after their engagement more skilled and engaged.

These immersive experiences equip IBMers for the challenges of working and leading in a global organization. For example, over 80 percent of 2017 Corporate Service Corps (CSC) participants said the experience improved their leadership skills, and over 90 percent said it benefited their teamwork and collaboration skills. Among 24 professional skills we ask about, CSC participants said their engagements helped develop 11 on average. Over 40 percent also reported that their CSC work improved their proficiency in key technologies including data analytics, cloud and social.

Corporate Service Corps (CSC) offers IBMers an immersive experience designed to benefit communities, enrich its participants culturally and support IBM’s global leadership development. The program deploys teams of 10–15 to partner with governmental, not-for-profit and social organizations, healthcare providers and other civic leaders to address high-priority issues in education, health, economic development and community resiliency.

IBM Health Corps teams focus on healthcare disparities, using technology to expand access to services and improve health systems. The program engages with partners to develop innovative solutions for improving health systems, access to services and population outcomes. IBM experts deploy for three weeks and in 2017 our work reached sub-Saharan Africa, Panama and the Southeastern United States.

Smarter Cities Challenge has sent IBMers to devise solutions for urban challenges in 138 cities over seven years. IBM experts deploy for three weeks to collaborate with local city and civic leaders on issues including social equity, economic development, emergency management or the environment. In 2017, teams assisted five cities on four continents.

IBM also supports employees and retirees in self-directed efforts through IBM Volunteers, an expanded, refreshed and renamed initiative. Launched in 2003 as On Demand Community, the program has recorded over 20 million hours of service in 80 countries, including 1.2 million in 2017. It provides free resources to help IBMers share their skills and expertise to improve communities while enriching their professional development.

Pro bono programs help equip IBMers for the challenges of working and leading in a global organization.