

# Diversity Matters

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●●●●● COVER STORY

# THE POWER OF DIVERSITY

*Tata Power Delhi Distribution's workplace policies are geared towards empowering its women employees to lead by nurturing and developing their strengths*

A diverse workforce contributes a unique set of skills, ideas, and life experiences that can broaden the entire company's perspective. In this context, Tata Power Delhi Distribution (Tata Power-DDL) recognises the diverse strengths that women can bring to an organisation, such as empathy and

sensitivity, team building skills, the ability to multi-task, etc. The company's workplace policies are therefore geared towards harnessing these strengths, and nurturing and developing them, in order to sustain, empower and advance women at work. "Empowerment of women in the workforce means ensuring they have equal

opportunities, and the freedom to decide and control their careers and lives. It means giving them the choice to chart their own careers, enhance their skill sets and manage challenging assignments. It is about self-respect, self-confidence and pride. And I strongly believe that true enablement is created when the strengths of our women colleagues

are fully recognised and utilised,” says Praveer Sinha, CEO and MD, Tata Power-DDL.

Creating the right ecosystem to sustain and develop women workforce has been an important hallmark of success and leadership at Tata Power-DDL. Says Mr Sinha, “At Tata Power-DDL, we have initiated several policies to encourage the overall growth and development of women employees. These well-defined policies and practices reflect our deep organisational commitment towards women in the workforce.”

Here are some of Tata Power-DDL's policies and initiatives that support women leadership and empowerment.

### **Empowering through challenging roles**

Employees posted in zonal offices have to directly interact with customers. It requires strategic managerial acumen and tact to manage difficult customers and build long-term relationships. Tata Power-DDL has made women an integral part of core areas such as Operations & Maintenance. Information sessions prior to posting are organised to provide clarity regarding their role. Soft skill workshops on assertiveness, people management, dealing with consumers, and emotional intelligence are conducted side-



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— **Praveer Sinha**, CEO and MD, Tata Power-DDL

by-side with periodic training sessions to brush up on technical skills. Tata Power-DDL has posted several women in critical roles such as zonal managers and heads of important groups. These employees are succeeding very well.

### **Mentorship by senior leaders**

Tata Power-DDL introduced a mentoring programme in 2014

for all women executives from the ranks of manager and above. The objective was to encourage and catalyse their personal and professional growth. Senior leaders were co-opted to provide role models and act as mentors. Mentors meet with their mentees once a month and carry the responsibility of recognising and empowering women professionals to take up senior management positions.

### **Support during critical life stages**

Tata Power-DDL believes that the decision to have a family should never deter a woman from pursuing her career. The company's policies are geared towards creating an environment that supports a woman employee during maternity, and nurtures family life. For instance:

**Extended maternity leave:** Tata Power-DDL provides 26 weeks of paid maternity leave to all its women employees. This can further be extended by 12 weeks of unpaid leave. To ensure that female employees are not put at a disadvantage with respect to their career goals due to maternity leave, guidelines have been laid down to protect the performance ratings of employees.

**Child adoption leave:** Employees who wish to adopt children get the benefit of leave for 9-18 weeks.



## Women SPEAK



“As a woman in the organisation, it is really encouraging to see that the company has imbibed the value and principle of equal employment opportunities for all in its spirit, regardless of age and gender. I am grateful to the management for having faith in my abilities and giving me the opportunity to contribute more to the organisation. Finding

solutions to these challenges will make me tougher and make me ready to embrace any challenges in life! In this organisation, young girls with dreams can become women with visions!

— **Aastha Parasher**, Zonal Manager

“Tata Power-DDL is working to change the stereotype that engineering is a man’s field. It provides ample opportunities of growth to its employees, both male and female, irrespective of whether they are technical or non-technical. Since I joined as management trainee, I have been given the opportunity to work in varied groups and functions. I have been given the opportunity to study at Emeritus University, Singapore, and am personally mentored by the MD and CFO. Overall, the company has been able to engage me intellectually and emotionally, which will help me in accomplishing my goals aligned to the organisation.

— **Shweta Mathur**, Head of Group - Business Relations & Analytics



“In order to improve the leadership skills of women employees, Tata Power-DDL has institutionalised a mentoring programme, which has really helped us open up about our issues and recognise our strengths, thereby making us ready for future leadership positions. Several women employees have also been recommended for the Cross



Company Mentoring Programme introduced by the Tata group, which is a very positive step towards our overall development.

— **Dipanwita Ray**, AGM, Business Excellence

“Tata Power-DDL is known for its emphasis on welfare of its workforce and our policies reflect the same. For instance, the



maternity policy for women employees is perhaps the most employee friendly policy, with its leverage for flexible work hours, and consideration of the last-best three ratings for promotion. It clearly shows the organisation’s intent to uplift and motivate its women associates to prosper in their career and and maintain work-life balance.

— **Arti Garg**,  
Head of Group - IT Applications



“Tata Power-DDL is my first organisation, and I have just completed one year of service here. It has been a very interesting

experience and there have been immense opportunities for learning. What I liked most is the well-defined induction programme and engagement initiatives for trainees. Moreover, there have been exclusive training programmes for women since the beginning, which have been of great help in my grooming and development.

— **Deepa Pathak**, Sr. Executive, HR

**Flexible work hours:** Post maternity or adoption, Tata Power-DDL allows flexible hours for women for up to six months after they return to the workplace. Employees may plan their daily work timings so that they are able to manage the competing demands of family and job, without work getting impacted.

**Break in service:** Women employees can apply for a 'break in service' for a period of up to two years, post maternity or adoption leave. This policy has two benefits: it allows women employees to continue their career aspirations post-maternity, and also helps the company curb attrition caused by women leaving to focus on family life.

**Tie-ups with crèches:** Tata Power-DDL has tied up with crèches and daycare centres near major locations, and pays up to half of the basic monthly fee for children up to three years of age.

**Reorientation on joining back:** Employees returning from maternity leave go through a reorientation programme to help them reconnect with the organisation and pick up from where they left off. These sessions cover new policies, process improvements and other changes

that help employees reintegrate seamlessly into the system.

### Exclusive training programmes for women employees

Tata Power-DDL offers frequent training programmes to help women fulfil their career aspirations and essay leadership roles, such as the 'special leadership training programme for women employees' conducted by renowned faculty from IIM, image management programmes, self-defence classes for women, etc. The 'enhancing leadership capacities and potential amongst women employees' programme covered leadership capacities and how to identify gender entrapments that constrain one's potential.

### Dialogue with CEO & MD

Women employees are given an opportunity to interact with the company's CEO & MD in the Annual Dialogue every year, to discuss their issues as well as to share feedback and suggestions on various policies.

All these efforts towards the welfare and development of Tata Power-DDL's women employees will go a long way in creating a positive and secure working environment for them. The company also hopes to create more employment opportunities for women, and strengthen workplace diversity. ○

