

India Inc welcomes moms back on board

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COMPANIES have started wooing women who left their careers midway to take care of their families. These employees will not just improve the companies' talent pipeline but also balance their diversity scale.

Take the case of PepsiCo India. The cola major has tied up with Jobstreet.com to offer employment opportunities to career-oriented women who want to return to work. This, says the company, will help take its diversity & inclusion initiative forward. The roles

already on offer include market research professionals, project managers and quality control managers. It's a mix of part-time and full-time jobs to allow flexibility to these women. Pepsi has increased the percentage of women on its rolls from 5% to 20%. The firm is also in talks with 15-20 other companies, including Microsoft, IBM, Fidelity and Ceat Tyres, to take the initiative forward.

"We need consumers' representation in the workforce to understand their needs," says PepsiCo India HR director Pavan Bhatia. "An initiative like this will help us find women who are highly qual-

ified and could be a part of Pepsi as well as the workforce in general."

Through this partnership, both the companies will collectively provide work opportunities to talented women who had to discontinue corporate careers for their families for a few years and are now keen to return. The working conditions will, naturally, be altered to balance home and work. For the last one year, PepsiCo India, along with Jobstreet, have been working on the roles and opportunities that can be offered to them.

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PEPSICO India is also evaluating flexible roles internally and will be offering options such as working from home. This appears to be the need of the hour for women who want to start working again. Without such option, the country stands to lose a vital source of already trained and experienced professionals.