

National Business Women's Week October 20-24

More than 70 years ago, President Herbert Hoover designated the third week of October as "National Business Women's Week." Founded in 1919, Business and Professional Women/USA <<http://www.bpwusa.org>> (BPW/USA), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to career advancement and professional development for female professionals nationwide, has celebrated this annual awareness-raising event ever since. Each year, most of the Washington, D.C.-based organization's 2,000 local chapters honor outstanding businesswomen and corporations that value female employees.

Here are some current facts and figures about women and the labor force that can help human resources specialists put women and work into perspective for their organizations' own culture and diversity initiatives.

1. There were 61 million women in the labor force in 1998. Seventy-four percent (45 million) were employed full-time and 26 percent (16 million) worked part-time.
2. In 1999, 60 percent of women age 16 and over were either working or looking for work, Nearly three out of four women between the ages of 20 and 54 were labor force participants.
3. Women's share of the labor force reached 46 percent in 1994 and has remained at this level. By 2005, women are expected to make up 48 percent of the labor force.
4. In 1998, 40.7 percent of employed women worked in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations, 31.4 percent worked in managerial and professional fields, and 17.5 percent worked in service occupations.
5. In 1998, 3.7 million women were multiple job-holders, compared with 4.2 million men.
6. Women accounted for half of the 5.6 million contingent workers (temporary help agency workers, independent contractors, part-time and temporary workers) in 1997.
7. The labor force participation rate for working mothers in 1998 was 71.8 percent. The participation rate for married mothers with children under a year old was 57.6 percent, and the rate for unmarried mothers with children under a year old was 58.8 percent.
8. In 1999, 255,000 women in their 70s, 80s, and 90s were employed or actively seeking employment in the United States, an 80 percent increase since 1985. The U.S. Social Security Administration projects that more than 7 million people aged 65 and over will fill the labor force by 2020, and 3 million of them will be women.

Source: BPW/USA's 101 Facts on the Status of Working Women, Washington, DC., www.bpwusa.org <<http://www.bpwusa.org>>

Source: BNET Business Network

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