



CLOUD 9 INFOSYSTEMS
TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERING BUSINESS

Microsoft
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Microsoft

Gold Cloud Platform
Gold Application Development
Gold Data Analytics
Gold Collaboration and Content
Gold Cloud Productivity

CLOUD 9

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STORY



Introduction

Cloud 9 Infosystems is a modern example of how a committed small business leader can build a more diverse and inclusive organization while at the same time fostering a culture of innovation and improving financial performance and growth.

"A large part of our success comes from our small size," says President Sonal Malavia. "We can change much more quickly than larger firms and can gather feedback and implement decisions much more rapidly.

Women's talent has taken a hard hit because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Handling caregiving responsibilities and a job can be overwhelming—something that has become starkly clear for women during the COVID-19 pandemic. One in 5 workers in the U.S. knows a woman who has voluntarily left the workforce during the pandemic because of such responsibilities, according to new research from the Society for Human Resource

Management (SHRM). Women also have taken on more responsibilities at home, including schooling their children.

Additionally, over 1/4 of employed female Americans with caregiving responsibilities feel their professional development has been muzzled during the pandemic compared to men.

"Lack of flexible working conditions, role models, gendered career paths, and challenges accessing sponsors and influential networks were already holding women back," says Sonal Malavia, President of Cloud 9 Infosystems.

A real challenge in our Technology industry is that if you were not "Digital skilling" and participating in associated programs during the recession or the pandemic and are looking for work now, you are three years behind the market curve.

Secrets to Cloud 9 Success

Cloud 9 has proven that a thoughtful, genuine, and sustained commitment to Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) along with full integration of its premises into talent and business-based practices will ultimately deliver results. Cloud 9's D&I progress—in terms of numbers—has been slow and steady. But our CEO has transformed the culture and elevated Cloud 9's social brand.

Cloud 9 did pretty much everything it could to help people stay current, with paid training for certifications and remote work options, flexible work schedules, especially for the first time, and new moms.

A passionate believer in diversity, Cloud 9 has made it a practice to appoint women to the Pre-Sales, Marketing, Recruiting, Accounting, and Delivery departments along with recruiting talent with hidden disabilities, which has

transformed their hiring practices.

Staying current on fast-paced ever-emerging technological skills has been another critical factor for success through the pandemic.

Matching more experienced people who have had difficulty learning the new tools and are experienced in management and realizing projects with great architecture has also been a core strength. The company mandates certifications for all employees to fundamentally understand the technology to remain competitive in the market.



One of the critical factors for success is hiring young women to bring this in-depth knowledge and combine them with senior architects to bring fresh ideas and culture to our organization.

Cloud 9 hiring international graduates from global universities adds diversity to our team and enriches other team members' experience. Cloud 9, with its strong global presence, has a wealth of cultural events, allowing international interns an opportunity to share their food, music, and traditions with their U.S. peers.



Cloud 9 conducted staff awareness training to implicit bias, promote conscious inclusion, and prevent discrimination through rewards, recognitions, open conversations with management, and created their workplaces to be more welcoming to people of color, whether they are job applicants, employees, customers vendors.

With the avid support of male allies at Cloud 9, significant progress toward ending gender disparities was accomplished. As a result, men within the organization are aware, well-informed, engaged in generous listening, and understand the critical importance of collaborating with their women colleagues.

Data is already showing that the risk of a She-cession is accurate and especially weighted against women of color.

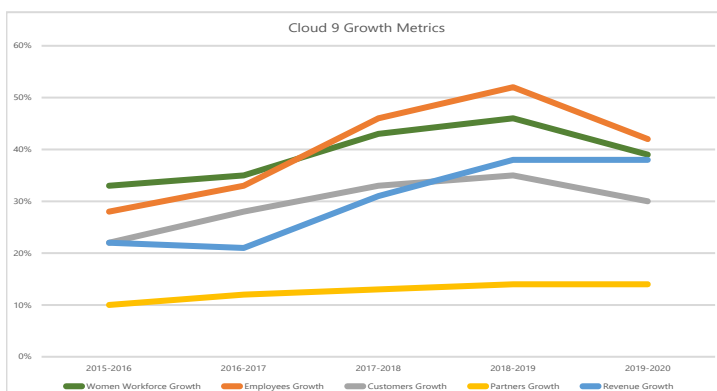
A "leading-edge" success model for Cloud 9 looks like the following:

Critical actions are taken to support women in the Cloud 9 workplace in the following areas:

- Allowing for a Hybrid work environment to create time for training.
- Compliance: Ensuring that the organization is aware of what is expected concerning D&I.
- Better Talent integration & Onboarding experience to ensure success.
- Operation Integration to ensure that inclusion is always top of mind.
- Consciously seeking opportunities for Market Integration.

While we have endured these difficult times and improved our D&I practices, the metrics also show that we have also been challenged. Since 2015 the percentage of new hires at Cloud 9 female increased, but it is clear from the statistics how the pandemic affected us.

2014-2015	33%
2016-2017	35.3%
2017-2018	42.9%
2018-2019	46.2%
2019-2020	38.7%



"We need to be more intentional about understanding what workers want, and especially what women need," - Sonal Malavia.

She goes on to articulate and conclude, "Our success is having great relationships between our Executives, diverse teams, our clients, and business partners and maintaining those relationships because you never know whom you're going to work with in the future.

As our country and economy look to grow and move forward, we must address how we bring women back to work. How do we account for the career consequences that result from time away? How do we support single mothers and those who are the primary breadwinners for their families? How will issues working mothers face today impact the next generation?

Let us be sure to shine a light on and show up for each other every day with our actions and D&I business practices to make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity for success both personally and professionally."

